



**Representative Janine Boyd
9th House District**

**House Bill 206 Sponsor Testimony
House Ways & Means Committee
October 15, 2019**

Good afternoon Chairman Merrin, Vice Chair LaRe, Ranking Member Rogers, and esteemed members of the Ways & Means Committee. It's my honor to share my testimony with you today as joint sponsor of House Bill 206 with Representative Reggie Stoltzfus.

It is with great pleasure that I get to testify on HB 206, a bill to enhance the fully refundable tax credit for family adoptions. At this moment, I myself have become an adoptive mother to a beautiful baby boy. It's a beautiful thing to adopt a child into your family, but it is not a cheap decision either. The cost of adoption is one of the most difficult aspects of the adoption process for most families. The cost for adopting a child from a non-profit and foster care agencies range from \$10,000 to \$25,000. Those that choose to adopt from a private organization can incur costs reaching upwards of \$50,000. Agency and legal fees, medical expenses, changes to living situation and other circumstances create the cost of adoption.

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This bill increases the minimum credit that may be claimed from \$1,500 to \$5,000 for the adoption of a child, as well as making the credit full refundable. This is very helpful for a family because it allows them to reinvest money into crucial supplies they will need for the long-term care of their child and family health.

On any given day, more than 15,000 children in Ohio are living with foster families or in another out-of-home placements, such as group homes. Foster care costs the State and Federal government approximately \$18,000 per year per child; totaling \$271 million. My joint-sponsor and I plan to introduce two amendments to this bill that encourages foster care adoptions by increasing the fully refundable credit to the amount of \$10,000. Often time's children in foster care have more needs that need to be met, whether trauma care, mental health counseling, medical check-ups, and more. This refundable credit is necessary to the smooth transition of that child out of foster care and into the home of the adoptive parent.

Thank you for taking the time to hear my sponsor testimony on the importance of HB 206. My joint-sponsor and I look forward to taking any question.