



**Columbiana County Department of Job & Family Services
Child Support Enforcement Agency
Eileen Dray-Bardon, Director**

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Senate Judiciary Committee

September 20, 2017

Proponent Testimony of Debra S. Kempers, CSEA Administrator

SB125

Chairman Bacon, Vice Chairman Doan, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, my name is Debra Kempers and I am the Administrator for the Columbiana County Child Support Enforcement Agency. Columbiana County DJFS is a triple combined agency which includes Income Maintenance, Children Services and Child Support. I have worked for the agency for 28 years and have been in my current position for almost 12 years. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony in support of SB125.

As you may already know, the economic tables that we are currently using to determine the amount of a child support order have not been up-dated in over 25 years and when they were created, they were based on tables and data from the early 1980s. I believe it is crucial that the economic tables be up-dated to better represent and reflect the costs incurred in raising a child in today's economy. SB125 accomplishes this while also taking in account parenting time issues that have changed dramatically in the last 25 years. As family dynamics have evolved, we see dads spending more time with their children and taking a more active role in the parenting process. SB125's proposed changes acknowledge time spent with the children and allows that to be factored into the child support calculation.

Although orders for mid to higher income families may be slighted effected under the proposed changes in SB125, there are more significant changes for lower income Non-Custodial Parents. There is a self-sufficiency element built in that will result in low income Non-Custodial Parents retaining income necessary to maintain a level of sustainability necessary to be productive and employable.

SB125 also addresses issues unique to Non-Custodial Parents and Custodial Parents that have multiple children with the same or different partners by providing a consistent standard deduction for each child not subject to the order at hand.

Child Support Customer Service Web Portal: jfs.ohio.gov/ocs
Agency Website: www.columbianacountyjfs.org

Debra S. Kempers, CSEA Administrator
Ruth Rusnak, Establishment Supervisor
Doreen Taylor, Enforcement Supervisor



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Another element that I believe is important for the future is that SB125 proposes that the child support guidelines be removed from statute and placed in rule. We can't anticipate what changes we may see in the future of the child support program but we can predict, with certainty, that there will be changes. By moving the guidelines to rule format the process to make necessary adjustments, based on those changes, will be simplified.

Finally, please consider that the elements presented in SB125 are designed to work in tandem to produce orders that consider multiple aspects of today's families, represent current and reasonable costs involved with raising a child in today's economic climate and produce orders that are based on an ability to pay with a focus on increasing consistent and reliable payments to families.

In closing, Columbiana County DJFS / CSEA supports SB125 and we would ask that you lend your support to this bill as well. Your questions are welcome and your support is appreciated. SB125 is very important to the future of Ohio's Child Support Program. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Debra S. Kempers, Administrator
Columbiana County CSEA
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