



**Representative Lisa Sobecki
House District 45**

**House Bill (H.B.) 139: Waive Collection of Certain Unemployment Overpayments
March 24, 2021**

Chair Brinkman, Vice Lampton, Ranking Members Miranda, and members of the House Insurance Company: Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today in support of House Bill 139 with my Joint Sponsor, Representative Jeff Crossman. House Bill 139 requires the Director of the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services to waive the collection of Overpayments for both Regular State UI and PUA.

Current state law already permits waiving the collection of Overpayments in some circumstances. It is our understanding the ODJFS under the direction of former Director Kim (Hall) Henderson was beginning the process of waiving certain overpayments. House Bill 139 requires collection of overpayments of Regular State UI be waived if they were:

- 1) Intended to compensate the claimant for weeks between March 15, 2020 and April 30th 2021.
- 2) Paid out at no fault of the claimant
- 3) And the repayment would cause undue hardship on the claimant.

Additionally through the Consolidated Appropriation Act, H.R. 133, Congress granted authority for States to waive the collection of overpayments of PUA benefits similarly if:

- 1) The overpayment was paid out at no fault of the claimant
- 2) The repayment would be contrary to equity and good conscience.

It's clear Ohio's Unemployment system is overwhelmed. In some cases, claimants have waited several months to receive benefits they were eligible for creating significant hardships. Many are now unable to meet the immediate repayment demands after waiting months to receive these benefits to begin with. Due to unforeseen circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, waiving collection in these cases makes sense for Ohioans and our economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and I'd be happy to answer any questions following my joint sponsor's testimony.

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