

**Ohio Senate
Finance Committee
House Bill 110
Caroline King
Temple Tots Preschool
May 13, 2021**

Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Sykes and members of the committee, my name is Caroline King and I am the Director of Temple Tots Preschool in Portsmouth, Ohio. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony expressing my support for expanding the initial child care eligibility from 130% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) to 150% of the FPL in House Bill 110 through amendment SC2363.

I would like to share the story of a single working mother whose child attends my program. She misses eligibility by roughly \$50.00. She works in the health care field. She cannot pay her child care bill. I was forced with the decision to remove this family from my program. Several weeks after the removal she called me on the phone and asked if her child could return. She was forced to quit her job making \$14.00 with benefits to take a job making \$9.50 without benefits. She applied for child care assistance and qualified. This is a true and heartbreaking story.

As it stands now, a working single mother with two young children can only qualify for publicly funded child care if she is making less than \$28,236 (\$13.57 per hour) annually. Expanding to 150% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) would allow a single mother making less than \$32,580 (\$15.66/hour) annually to have access to affordable, quality child care without spending nearly 50% of her income on child care, which is currently estimated at over \$16,000 per year for two young children who do not qualify for publicly funded child care.

For all the reasons stated above, I am respectfully urging you to consider expanding initial eligibility for the publicly funded child care subsidy from 130% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) to 150% of the FPL as provided in HB 110. The pandemic has made clear now more than ever that if we want to have a thriving economy, we need increased access to quality child care so that parents and caregivers can return to work and stay on the job. Now is the time for us to double down on our commitment to Ohio's youngest and most vulnerable children, as well as the families who support them. The Ohio General Assembly has the opportunity to keep Ohioans working and businesses operating, help families break out of poverty, and ensure more Ohio children have access to high-quality early learning by expanding access to quality and affordable child care.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony today and please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Caroline King