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Standing Committees
Transportation, Ranking Member;
Behavioral Health;
Finance;
Government Oversight;
Public Health Policy;
Economic & Workforce Development

Michele Grim
State Representative

Before the House Finance Committee

House Bill 565 – Regards funding through the Ohio pregnancy and parenting program

Sponsor testimony provided by Representative Michele Grim

June 18, 2024

Chairman Edwards, Vice Chair LaRe, Acting Ranking Member Troy, and my fellow members of the House Finance Committee, thank you so much for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony for House Bill 565. I'd also like to thank my joint-sponsor, Representative Anita Somani, for allowing me to sponsor this legislation with her.

I genuinely believe we all share the same belief, that women, mothers, and parents in our state deserve the absolute best care they can receive, regardless of their own personal beliefs or where they go to receive their care. House Bill 565 would ensure guaranteed standards and a certain quality of care is met for every person who enters a pregnancy and parenting center in our state.

If enacted House Bill 565 would require that each pregnancy center provide at least four out of the following service categories:

1. **Resource distribution**, for items such as clothing, diapers, baby supplies, food, furniture, and shelter.
2. **Counseling**. This would include counseling on all options available to individuals, such as counseling or referrals related to abortion, adoption, or the parenting of the baby.
3. **Postpartum care recovery and parenting classes**.
4. **Health care** through licensed professionals, including contraceptives and reproductive healthcare, this could be completed through referral if necessary.
5. **Sexual education**, including information on abstinence and a full range of contraception options.
6. **Any other support services, programs, or related outreach**.

It is also important to note that under House Bill 565, pregnancy centers would now be allowed to serve pregnant women, parents, relatives caring for children, children 5 years and younger and individuals who may become pregnant. Under current law the scope of who they are able serve is much smaller, currently they can only serve pregnant women, parents or other relatives caring for children, and babies who are 1 year and younger.

As you just heard, centers would have a wide variety of ways to fulfill their legal requirements of service, while still serving their community's healthcare and personal needs. This is a bill that is genuinely written to improve quality of care for all Ohioans, to strike a balance that honors all medical beliefs.

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Lastly, there is a reporting component to this bill. Pregnancy centers would be required to complete annual reports for the review of the General Assembly, Governor's office, and Ohio Department of Health. This report would include what services are provided at the center, what percentage of funds are used for services, health care, and administrative costs, accordingly.

Chairman Edwards, Vice Chair LaRe, Acting Ranking Member Troy, and my fellow members of the House Finance Committee, thank you so much again for the opportunity to share testimony regarding House Bill 565. Representative Somani and I would be happy to take any questions the committee may have at this time.