



OHIO CHILD SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION

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House Homeland Security Committee
Interested Party Testimony of Amy Roehrenbeck, Esq.
Ohio Child Support Professionals Association
SB37
December 11, 2024

Chairman Ghanbari, Vice Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide Interested Party testimony on SB37 on behalf of the Ohio Child Support Professionals Association (formerly known as the Ohio CSEA Directors' Association). We are a membership organization of county child support enforcement agencies (CSEAs), dedicated to strengthening Ohio's child support program through education, advocacy, and support. My name is Amy Roehrenbeck, and I serve as the Executive Director.

I provided IP testimony on a similar bill affecting child support license suspension in this committee last year, HB29. I will not go into the details that I did for that testimony, but please know that the provisions of SB37 that affect child support license suspension are nearly identical to that in HB29. I want to thank Senators Blessing and Ingram, as well as Senator Manning, for working with us, the Ohio State Bar Association, and the Ohio Judicial Conference on amendments regarding these provisions.

I want to offer a few points regarding child support license suspension for your information as you consider this bill. First, our suspension is different from other types of "debt related" suspensions. Child support is a duty, not a debt, and this tool is an important leverage remedy to address parents that are able to pay their support but choose not to pay. Child support license suspension is an effective tool to bring in money for families in cases that otherwise would not receive support.

Second, we have license suspension as an optional enforcement remedy because it is required by federal regulations. All states are required to have license suspension as an enforcement tool as part of their state plan under 42 USC 666. If we do not have this, we can be found to be in non-compliance with the state plan, which puts Ohio's TANF grant at risk.

Third, license suspension is not mandatory. This tool is permissive and there are rules about how and when it can be utilized. These rules apply to all county CSEAs.

Fourth, many of the reasons that a person could get limited driving privileges under SB37 are the same reasons that a CSEA can restore **FULL** driving privileges. In order to have a child support suspension lifted, a parent can do any of the following:

- 1) Make a full payment of the arrearage amount; or
- 2) Provide the CSEA with evidence of current employment or an account in a financial institution from which the child support obligation can be withheld; or
- 3) Provide the CSEA with evidence sufficient to establish that the parent is unable to work due to circumstances beyond their control; or
- 4) Work with the CSEA to enter and comply with the terms of a family support program administered or approved by the agency, or a program to establish compliance with a seek work order; or
- 5) Pay the balance of the total monthly obligation due for the 90-day period preceding the date the agency sent the default notice.

If a parent works with the CSEA to meet one of these five criteria to get their license reinstated, the CSEA is required to reinstate the license. No limited driving privileges are needed. There is an immediate release of the suspension sent electronically to the BMV. Once the \$25 reinstatement fee is paid to the BMV the parent is restored to full driving privileges.

Finally, this leverage remedy brings money into households who may not otherwise receive any payment. CSEAs collect money from both the pre-suspension notices and the license reinstatements. This equates to millions of dollars each year for the support of children.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I am happy to answer any questions.