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Ohioans for Child Protection
Proponent Testimony HB 147
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Chairman Bird, Vice Chair Fowler Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony as an Ohio parent and the co-chair of Ohioans for Child Protection. Ohioans For Child Protection is a grassroots effort of concerned parents and grandparents to prevent child sex abuse in Ohio and provide paths to justice for victims.

First, a quick review of CSA fast facts. Child predators will use any youth serving organization to gain access and authority over children. Professions such as teaching, athletics / coaching, and religious clerics can provide an offender with a high level of access and authority to minors. The vast majority of our state's teachers are dedicated to education and the well-being of the students in their care. Common sense approaches to educator sexual misconduct will protect children and our communities' trust in our schools.

- The CDC estimates that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 13 boys experience sexual abuse in the United States (Fast Facts: Preventing Child Sexual Abuse | Violence Prevention | Injury Center | CDC)
- Ohio has approximately 2.5 million children (U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Ohio) according to CDC and Child USA estimates between 10-13.5% of children experience sexual abuse by age 18. Therefore 250,000-350,000 children in Ohio are victims or will become victims by age 18
- Someone known or trusted by the child will perpetuate 91% of the abuse (Fast Facts: Preventing Child Sexual Abuse | Violence Prevention | Injury Center | CDC)
- The total lifetime economic burden of child sex abuse in the United States was estimated in 2015 to be 9.3 billion dollars (Fast Facts: Preventing Child Sexual Abuse | Violence Prevention | Injury Center | CDC)
- "Child sexual abusers often develop a relationship with a child to manipulate him or her into compliance with the sexual act, which is perhaps the most damaging component of child sexual abuse" (John Jay College, 2004) Chapter 3: Sex Offender Typologies | Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (ojp.gov)

The infographic below from Child USA ([Child Rights & Sexual Abuse Statute of Limitations Reform | Child USA](#)) indicates that fixated offenders will average 150 victims in their lifetime and that the average age to disclose child sex abuse is age 52. This delay in disclosure is why most states have eliminated the statute of limitations for child sex abuse (Ohio HB 124).

FACT SHEET

Window Legislation for Child Sex Abuse Statutes of Limitations

1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be sexually abused ■ **Child molesters on average will abuse at least 150 children** ■ **Child sexual abuse costs the federal government over \$9 billion each year**

THE TRAUMA OF SEX ABUSE

often leads to depression, PTSD, alcohol and opioid abuse, and many physical ailments, frequently delaying disclosure. The average age for disclosure is 52 years-old.

DELAYED DISCLOSURE

Most child victims of sexual assault disclose, if they disclose at all, during adulthood, with a median age of 48 and an average age of 52.

CHILD USA



The numbers in Ohio are staggering and behind every number is a child whose childhood was stolen. In 2019 Cincinnati reporter Craig Cheatham did a report on the child sex abuse within the Catholic Schools in our city. I realized with that report that three generations of my family had a child sex offender teaching them in their parochial school. [Culture of Silence: Where they worked? | WCPO.com](#)

My own four children had a now convicted offender running their parochial school. Fr. Geoff Drew, with well documented red flag behaviors with minors ran St. Ignatius School for the 2018-19 school year in Cincinnati. Geoff Drew began his career as a music teacher. He was raping little boys during the school day at St. Jude school in Cincinnati, OH. Two victims came forward as adults. One saw Geoff Drew convicted and the other was unable to bring charges due to statute of limitations.

[Cincinnati priest pleads guilty to raping altar boy, gets 7 years in deal with prosecutors \(fox19.com\)](#)

Ensuring that educators with sexual misconduct allegations cannot retire, evade scrutiny, and then seek employment as an educator elsewhere is a practical step to prevent further abuse.

Revoking the license of educators that have been convicted on soliciting human trafficking services is an additional common-sense measure. Each year human trafficking stings arrest individuals that work in youth organizations roles. These are just a few news stories from this year.

[Ohio human trafficking operation leads to 160 arrests \(usatoday.com\)](#)

[Ohio human trafficking sting nabs 10 men, including teacher, illegal immigrant | Fox News](#)

[Former Westlake Schools Superintendent Arrested in Sex Trafficking Sting | Ohio News | Cleveland | Cleveland Scene \(clevescene.com\)](#)

Ohio should consider a multi-faceted approach to lessen the rate of child sex abuse in Ohio due to the public safety risks, long term individual costs and societal costs. Predators will seek out youth serving organizations with inadequate policies and poor execution of policies. HB 147 would be a prudent step toward protecting the children in our state.