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**Ohio Senate
Health Committee
Sub. HB 33
Lynanne Gutierrez, Chief Operating & Policy Officer
Groundwork Ohio
May 9, 2023**

Chair Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Health Committee, my name is Lynanne Gutierrez and I am the Chief Operating and Policy Officer at Groundwork Ohio.

Today, I join with fellow advocates, professionals, community leaders and families from across Ohio in thanking you for the opportunity to provide interested party testimony on Substitute House Bill 33, Ohio's FY 2024-2025 budget bill, regarding the state publicly funded child care program and preschool programs and early childhood mental health consultation.

Groundwork Ohio is a statewide, nonpartisan public-policy research and advocacy organization that champions high-quality early learning and healthy development strategies from the prenatal period to age five, that lay a strong foundation for Ohio kids, families, and communities. Our vision is to make Ohio the best place to be a young child so that every child can reach their full potential.

Investing in Young Children Today and Tomorrow Strengthens Ohio

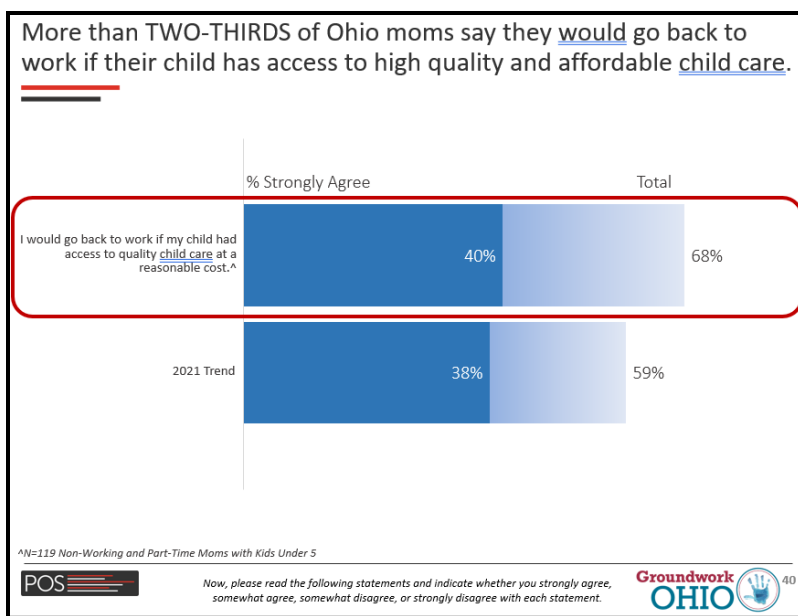
It is widely acknowledged that Ohio is facing a workforce crisis. Our states and industries are creating new jobs as they struggle to even maintain current capacity. The challenge to find accessible and affordable child care, which was made worse by the pandemic, is a serious problem, particularly in rural areas of Ohio that is greatly impacting our workforce crisis. It is costing families and the state economy billions of dollars and is worsening the labor shortage challenges for Ohio businesses and causing children to fall further behind.

The lack of investment in Ohio's young children and child care leaves Ohio's young children behind and jeopardizes our future workforce. All of Ohio's young children need early learning opportunities to ensure they can reach their full potential and a lifetime of success. According to the Ohio Department of Education, with only 38% of Ohio kindergartners entering the classroom ready to learn, and only 38% of Ohio students proficient in 8th grade math, workforce readiness is in jeopardy. It's no surprise that most children aren't ready to learn given that only about half of eligible low-income children ages

0-5 under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, those that stand to benefit the most from early learning interventions, are able to access any state funded child care, preschool or Head Start. (See *Groundwork Ohio, Early Childhood Data Dashboard*)

The lack of investment in Ohio’s young children and child care directly impacts a working mothers’ ability to provide for her family. This plays a foundational role in stabilizing business, rebuilding our economy and helping families thrive. According to a recent poll of Ohio voters and parents by Public Opinion Strategies, nearly 70% of non-working or part-time working moms with children under the age of five in Ohio said they would go back to work or work more hours if they had access to child care at a reasonable cost. (See Appendix A, *Public Opinion Strategies, Ohio Statewide Poll Key Findings*)^j

Figure 1: Moms Need Child Care to Work



The lack of investment in Ohio’s young children and child care restricts Ohio’s workforce today in and in the future. A strong child care industry means parents can go back to work today knowing their child is receiving early learning experiences while building and strengthening the workforce of tomorrow.

- On average, child care costs are more costly than rent in Ohio. Our cost ratio is among the worst in the nation.
- Further, child care availability is severely limited. 60% of rural Ohioans and 30% of all Ohioans are living in a child care desert, defined as an area with three times as many children as licensed child care slots.
- For Ohio parents, child care is difficult to access and afford. Most parents with children under five (55%) believe child care is difficult to find. Further, most parents with children under five (52%) believe it has gotten harder to afford and access quality child care in the last year. When it comes to the cost of child care, Ohioans (84%) overwhelmingly believe child care is expensive.
- Ohioans acknowledge serious staffing shortages at child care facilities as a problem, with many saying their child has been wait-listed for a spot. More than two-thirds of

Ohioans (69%) say that local child care facilities in their area are having “serious staffing shortages.”

- A majority of parents with children under five (52%) say they or someone they know are on the waitlist for child care, and more than 4-in-10 (45%) of those parents on a wait list say they have been on it for more than six months.

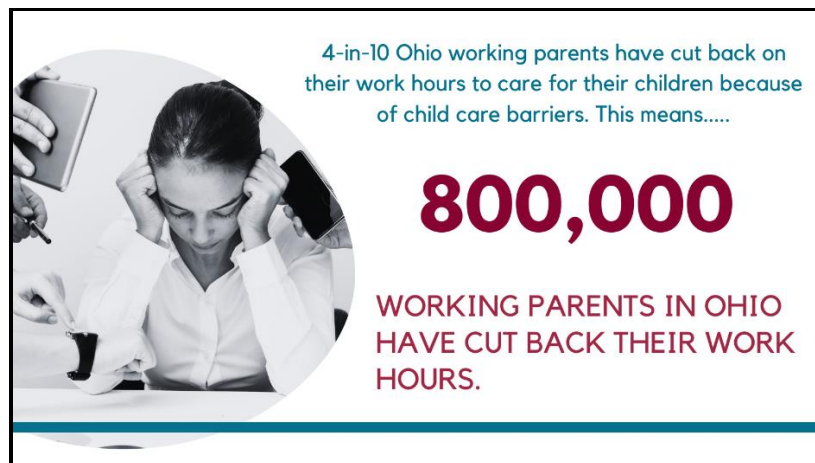
Figure 2: Child Care Wait Lists



The lack of investment in Ohio’s young children and child care impacts Ohio’s ability to attract new business investment across the state. Right now, Ohio parents are forced to choose between taking on full-time employment because they cannot afford the high cost of child care. According to a ReadyNation [study](#) published in February, Ohio’s economy loses approximately \$3.9 billion per year due to infant-toddler child care issues. Nationally, the annual cost of these issues is \$122 billion in lost earnings, productivity, and revenue.

- Nearly 4-in-10 working parents with children under five (38%) say they have had to miss work, leave early or lose focus because of challenges with child care.
- Further, almost one-third of working parents (32%) say they have lost more than five days of work in the past two years because of a lack of child care.

Figure 3: 800,000 working parents have cut back their work hours



Given these alarming challenges of working parents and the recognition of these challenges by voters demonstrated through the poll, it is no surprise that **80% of voters and 87% of parents favor increasing funding in the state for child care and early learning programs.**

In addition to voters and parents, business leaders are also calling for more state investment in child care. In October 2022, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce released its [Blueprint for Ohio's Economic Success](#), leading its recommendations for reducing barriers to employment with the recommendation to remove child care as a barrier for caregivers and working parents. Earlier this year, business leaders from across the state signed an open letter to policy makers supporting investments in child care and preschool (See *Appendix B*).

Ohio Babies are Suffering & Young Children Need More Support Than Ever

While there are many ways we can begin to improve outcomes for our young children, families and the state, focusing state efforts on its very youngest citizens is an urgent moral imperative as well as a wise state investment.

In Ohio, babies bear a disproportionate burden of our failing systems. Even where there have been investments in high quality birth-to-five interventions, disparities remain. In Ohio, infant mortality rates continue to be worse than the U.S. average at 6.9 infant deaths (under age 1) per 1,000 births, with a large and appalling racial disparity. The important goal of reaching a first birthday should be the floor, not the ceiling of success. Yet, upon birth, Ohio babies and their families are faced with insurmountable challenges:

- There are almost twice as many cases of neonatal abstinence syndrome in Ohio than in the U.S. overall.
- More young children experience maltreatment (child abuse or neglect under age 1) in Ohio than in most other states. The trend only gets worse for Ohio babies with a 20% increase from 2017 to 2020.

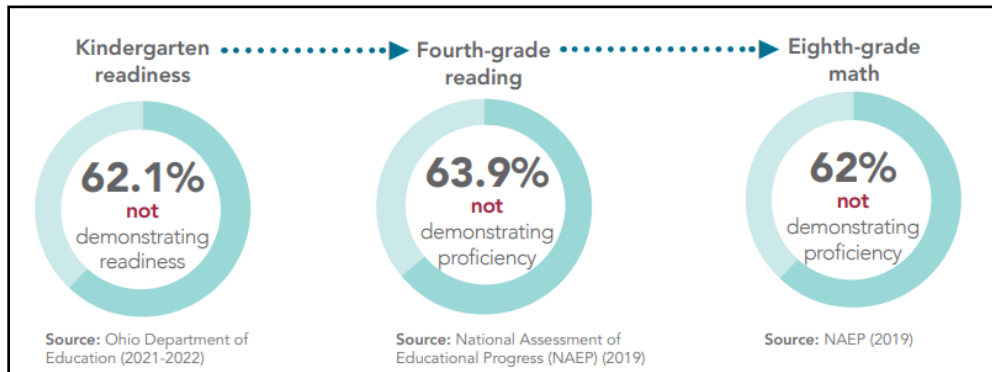
Figure 4: Early Learning Access for Ohio Infants & Toddlers
(See [Early Childhood Data Dashboard](#))



One key takeaway from our research reveals that Ohio kids are starting behind in kindergarten and staying behind. Research shows a strong connection between a child's readiness to enter kindergarten and their math and reading skills throughout their academic career. Currently, 62.1% of Ohio kindergartners are not demonstrating readiness for kindergarten and children who are economically disadvantaged are more than two times less likely to demonstrate kindergarten readiness than their more affluent peers (76.9% of economically disadvantaged kindergartners are not demonstrating readiness). This gap in kindergarten readiness exists in suburban, Appalachian, rural, and urban counties (see *Appendix A*). Even counties that perform relatively well overall see a gap in readiness for

children from economic disadvantage. Even more alarming is that this readiness gap doesn't close—nearly the same percentage of children who do not demonstrate readiness for kindergarten also do not demonstrate proficiency in fourth grade reading or eighth grade math. It's no surprise that most children aren't ready to learn and continue to struggle throughout K-12 given that less than half of children ages 0-5 under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level are able to access any state or federally funded child care, preschool or Head Start.

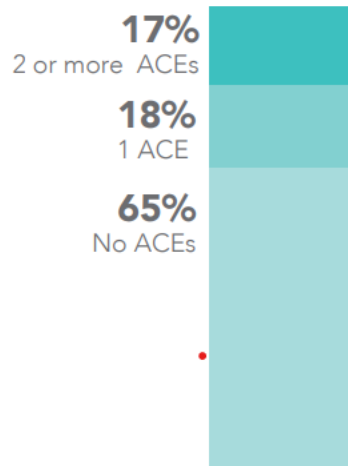
Figure 5: Kindergarten Readiness Gaps Persist



Ohio's young children are not ready to learn and many are arriving to the kindergarten classroom with significant mental health challenges because young children are often growing up and learning and playing in environments that do not protect them or fail to mitigate the harmful effects of stress, trauma, and adversity. Children who are in unsafe situations and children who lack nurturing relationships are more likely to be exposed to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Exposure to ACEs can lead to immediate and long-term negative health outcomes, but positive and supportive environments can serve as a buffer against the harms of childhood adversity and trauma. Early childhood experiences in child care with supported professionals, preschool, and home visiting can be a buffer for this adversity and support resilience building in these children and their families.

Figure 6: Early Childhood Trauma

Nearly 1 in 5 Ohio children, ages 0-5, have been **exposed to two or more adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)**.



Source: Ohio Medicaid Assessment Survey (2019)

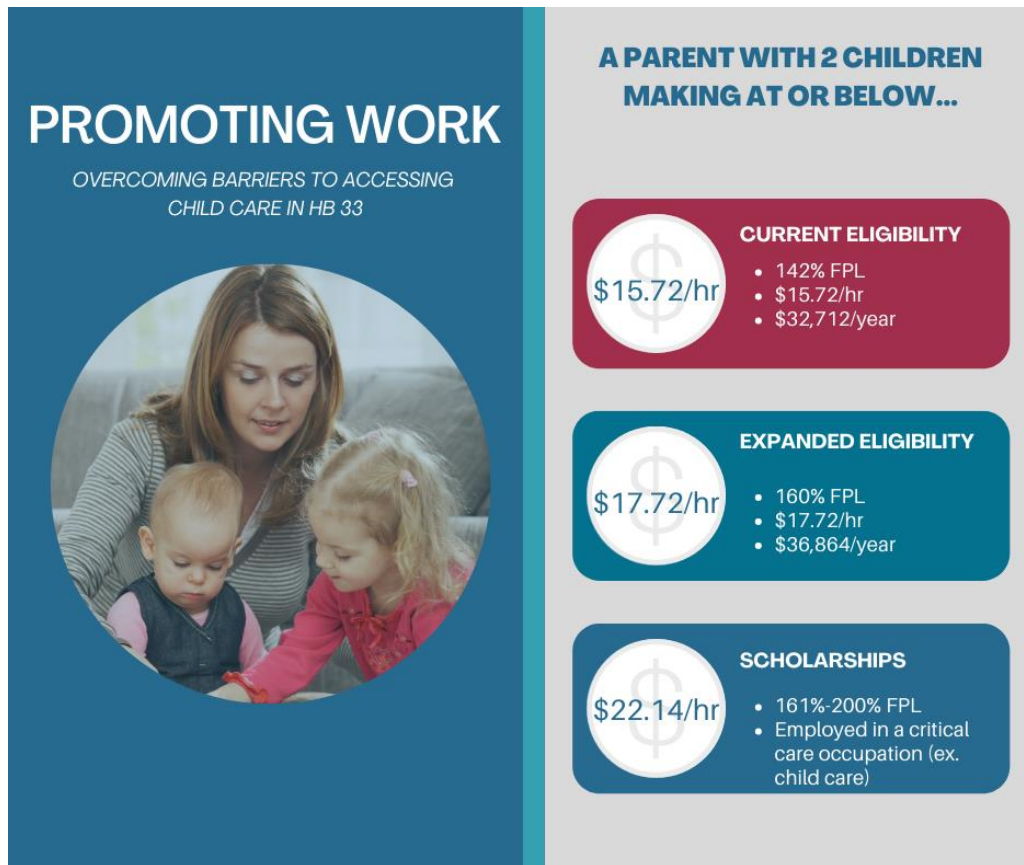
How to Invest in Young Children in the FY24-25 State Budget

We ask the Committee to support the following investments in early childhood that greatly impact the potential for children’s future success and well-being:

1. Restore the Governor’s proposed \$150 million in fiscal year 2024 to establish child care scholarships for critical occupations and other direct service professionals including child care professionals. Child care pays among the lowest wages of all frontline workers with an average hourly wage of only \$12.00/hour, contributing to a 29.4% employee turnover rate. (**SC0329**).
2. Restore the \$10 million cut by the House to the Governor’s proposed investment to support early childhood mental health credentialed counselors and consultation services (**SC0331**). This is the only line discreetly supporting young children’s mental health in our entire state budget. Across the state, ECMH Consultants support over 10,000 children each year. ECMH Master Trainers train over 8,000 participants annually. With a satisfaction rate of 92-95%, early learning professionals participating in ECMH Consultation and/or training report increased capacity to promote mental health and wellness and respond to the mental health needs of young children. (Source: Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services, Whole Child Matters Evaluation Report.)
3. Restore the nearly \$20 million cut by the House to the Governor’s proposed investment for the state evidence-based home visiting program, Help Me Grow (**SC0330**).
4. Maintain the \$30 million grant as passed by the House to increase capacity of local communities, specifically Appalachian and communities with high infant mortality rates, to provide safe and developmentally appropriate child care for infants and toddlers.
5. Maintain the increased funding for the state’s preschool Early Childhood Education grants as passed by the House.

6. Maintain the increase in eligibility for publicly funded child care from 142% to 160% of the FPL as passed by the House. This increase expands access to child care for more Ohio families including a family of three that makes at or below \$17.72 per hour. A critical workforce support and opportunity for early learning, this will result in more than 15,000 children and families gaining access to care.

Figure 7: The Impact of Increased Eligibility & Critical Care Occupation Scholarships



While I know you will be hearing from a few families today about their personal challenges with child care, I invite you to review *Appendix C, Ohio Parent Voices on Child Care*. This provides a focused collection of family quotes, statements and stories from some of the many families who are working or caring for their children and not in attendance with us today. They lend their expert voices in a chorus of support for increased access to child care and preschool in the state of Ohio. I am happy to answer questions you have today. Please use as a resource during the budget process and I can be reached directly via email at lgutierrez@groundworkohio.org or by phone at 614-204-6106.

¹ NOTE: All data referenced in this testimony is from the Public Opinion Strategies [Public Opinion Strategies, Ohio Statewide Poll Key Findings](#) attached hereto as *Appendix A* unless otherwise cited within the document.

MEMORANDUM

TO: INTERESTED PARTIES
FROM: NEIL NEWHOUSE/JARRETT LEWIS/JAMIE WADOVICK GENTLE
PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES
CC: SHANNON JONES, PRESIDENT & CEO, GROUNDWORK OHIO
SUBJECT: OHIO STATEWIDE SURVEY: KEY FINDINGS
DATE: MARCH 2, 2023

On behalf of Groundwork Ohio, Public Opinion Strategies completed a statewide survey of 800 registered voters and an oversample of 435 parents with children under the age of five in Ohio. The survey was conducted February 2-13, 2023 and has credibility interval of $\pm 3.95\%$ for the registered voter sample and $\pm 5.36\%$ for the parents oversample.

KEY FINDINGS

- 1. Early childhood education/child care are strong secondary issues on voters' minds.***
Four-in-10 Ohioans (40%) and more than one-half of parents with children under five (51%) rank the issue of making sure children get a strong start in life through quality early childhood education programs as extremely important. And, more than three-in-ten Ohioans believe helping provide child care for working parents with young children (32%) and lowering the cost of child care (30%) is extremely important.
- 2. Ohioans, parents especially, are feeling the economic slowdown.***
Nearly one-half of Ohioans (45%) and parents with children under five (47%) rate their own financial situation as only fair or poor. And, over a quarter of parents with children under five (27%) share they have been having serious problems paying their rent or mortgage. More than 4-in-10 parents with children under five (41%) share they are having serious problems paying their credit card bills over the last few months.
- 3. For Ohio parents, child care is difficult to access and afford.***
Most parents with children under five (55%) believe child care is difficult to find, with a plurality of all Ohioans (46%) believing it has become harder to access child care since COVID-19 started. Further, most parents with children under five (52%) believe it has gotten harder to afford and access quality child care in the last year. When it comes to the cost of child care, Ohioans (84%) overwhelmingly believe child care is expensive.
- 4. Ohio parents are struggling to afford child care and put food on the table.***
Nearly one-half of Ohioans (47%) are concerned about being able to put enough food on the table over the next year, with fully 58% of parents with children under five sharing that concern. Further, a majority of these parents (56%) say they are having issues accessing high quality child care. In fact, nearly three-quarters of parents with children under five (72%) are either concerned about being able to put enough food on the table over the next year or are having issues accessing high quality child care.

5. *Problems with child care are having an economic impact.*

Nearly 4-in-10 working parents with children under five (38%) say they have had to miss work, leave early or lose focus because of challenges with child care. Further, almost one-third of working parents (32%) say they have lost more than five days of work in the past two years because of a lack of child care. And, among all Ohio working parents 4-in-10 (40%) have cut back on their work hours to care for their children. Putting this into real numbers using Census data, this means over 800,000 working parents in Ohio have cut back their work hours.

6. *Ohioans acknowledge serious staffing shortages at child care facilities as a problem, with many saying their child has been wait-listed for a spot.*

More than two-thirds of Ohioans (69%) say that local child care facilities in their area are having “serious staffing shortages.” Further, a majority of parents with children under five (52%) say they or someone they know are on the waitlist for child care, and more than 4-in-10 (45%) of those parents on a wait list say they have been on it for more than six months.

7. *There is a clear connection between the state’s economy and child care.*

When parents without child care are asked what would they be able to do if they had it, the dominant responses are “work more” and “get a job.” And, parents who have child care agree that child care allows them to “work more.” Further, fully two-thirds of Ohio moms with children under five who do not currently work full time (68%) say they would go back to work if they had access to high quality and affordable child care. Clearly, parents believe that child care allows them to work more, provide for their families and be productive members of Ohio’s economy.

8. *The support for increasing funding in Ohio for child care is broad and deep.*

Fully 8-in-10 Ohioans (80%) and nearly 9-in-10 parents with children under five (87%) believe the state should increase funding for child care. Even across party lines this support remains high, with nearly 7-in-10 Republicans (69%), over three-quarters of Independents (78%) and nearly all Democrats (92%) wanting to see an increase in funding.

BOTTOM LINE

Ohioans are still feeling the economic slowdown. In an environment where labor shortages continue to be pervasive across the state/country, child care remains an economic issue. With nearly half of parents with children under five (47%) experiencing only fair or poor financial situations and Ohioans overwhelmingly believing it is expensive, affording child care becomes remains a significant barrier to further workforce participation.

Those who don’t already have child care are running into issues accessing it. With serious staffing shortages taking place at Ohio’s child care facilities, most parents with children under five say they or someone they know is on a waitlist—with nearly half of them (45%) saying it’s a waiting period of more than 6 months. But, even those working parents who do have child care are having issues at work because of lack of child care coverage. They miss work, leave early, take days off, or cut back hours to care for their children.

Ohioans clearly understand and see the need for child care from an economic standpoint. They readily make the link between increasing access to child care and improving the state’s economy.

Prioritize Investments in Child Care in the State Budget

AN OPEN LETTER TO OHIO POLICYMAKERS

Dear Members of the Ohio General Assembly,

For businesses to compete, grow, and succeed—and for Ohio’s economy to thrive—we must build a strong workforce foundation and pipeline for continually increasing participation.

The child care crisis facing our state is among the primary challenges in recruiting and retaining reliable and productive workers. Parents’ decisions about work are greatly impacted by whether they have access to quality, affordable child care. The harsh reality is, in our state, they all-too-often do not.

As cited by the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, child care costs in Ohio are on average more costly than rent, with the cost ratio among the worst in the nation. There is also limited child care availability, with **60% of rural Ohioans and 30% of all Ohioans** living in a “child care desert”—an area with more than 50 children under five and no providers, or an area with three times as many children as licensed child care slots.

Make no mistake—this is a crisis that is also hamstringing our economy. In fact, the lack of quality child care for children ages three and younger is costing our country **\$122 billion a year** in lost earnings, productivity, and revenue, and Ohio’s economy loses an estimated **\$3.9 billion per year** due to child care issues, according to the Council for a Strong America, ReadyNation Report from February 2023.

Specifically, the lack of quality, affordable child care is a significant contributor to ongoing workforce challenges and labor shortages, which, according to the National Federation of Independent Business, remain among the top problems facing businesses. U.S. Chamber of Commerce studies show that **half of all workers and nearly 60% of parents** cite lack of child care as their reason for leaving the workforce, and **1 in 3 unemployed women** are not returning to the workforce because they must provide care for a family member.

Our state and our businesses are in dire need of strategic state investment in early childhood education, as expanding access to publicly funded childcare will help more people enter and remain in the workforce. Not only will it address the workforce challenges of today, but access to quality early childhood education is a two-generation workforce approach that also prepares the future workforce for school, career, and lifelong success. Research shows these investments have a domino effect, with each step predictive of the next—from kindergarten readiness to third grade reading achievement to eighth grade math achievement to high school graduation to postsecondary attainment. Ultimately, public policy to improve outcomes for our youngest Ohioans will also ensure the workforce of tomorrow is prepared to excel and contribute to a thriving economy in the future.

(continued next page)





That is why we—business and community leaders from across the state of Ohio—are strongly urging our state legislature to protect and pass through the upcoming biennial budget the new investments to increase accessibility and affordability of quality early education proposed by Governor DeWine. This includes the following measures:

- **Child Care Capacity:** An investment of \$150 million of state ARPA funds to provide child care scholarships and to increase infant and toddler child care capacity in communities throughout the state.
- **Child Care Eligibility:** An expansion of the state’s publicly-funded child care program from 142% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) to 160%, which would result in more than 15,000 children and families gaining access to care.
- **Preschool:** An additional \$46 million per year in Early Childhood Education grants, estimated to expand preschool to an additional 11,525 children under 200% FPL.



Even with these targeted investments, too many children and their families will still be left out. They are just the beginning of what is needed to fully address the child care crisis facing kids, parents, and Ohio businesses, but they are a vital step in the right direction.

Sincerely,

Pat Tiberi
President & CEO
Ohio Business Roundtable

Gordon Gough
President & CEO
Ohio Council of Retail Merchants

Janetta King
Midwest Director
Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses Voices

Kelly O'Reilly
President & CEO
Ohio Association of Health Plans

Rick Baxter
President
Alliance Area Development & Alliance Chamber

Eric Kearney
President & CEO
Greater Cincinnati | Northern Kentucky
African American Chamber of Commerce

Don DePerro
President & CEO
Columbus Chamber of Commerce

Deborah Feldman
President & CEO
Dayton Children's Hospital

Timothy Dutton
Executive Vice President
Kettering Health

Wendy Gramza
President & CEO
Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce

Jane Grote Abell
Chief Purpose Officer & Chairwoman
Donatos Pizza

Robert E. O'Neill
President & Founder
Southgate Corporation

John Pepper
Former CEO
Proctor & Gamble

Steve Stivers
President & CEO
Ohio Chamber of Commerce

John Barker
President & CEO
Ohio Restaurant Association

Shannon Jones
President & CEO
Groundwork Ohio

Todd Baker
Chief Executive Officer
Ohio State Medical Association

Kristin Miller
President
Athens Area Chamber of Commerce

Brendon Cull
President & CEO
Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber

Kenny McDonald
President & CEO
Columbus Partnership

Sarah Hackenbracht
President & CEO
Greater Dayton Area Hospital Association

Jennifer McDonald
President & CEO
Licking County Chamber of Commerce

Eric Phillips
CEO
Union County Chamber of Commerce

Tanny Crane
President & CEO
Crane Group

Jim Spurlino
CEO
Spurlino Materials

Chris Burns
Ohio Businessman
Parent & Grandparent of two young boys

Ryan Augsburger
President
Ohio Manufacturers' Association

Kristin Mullins
President & CEO
Ohio Grocers Association

Lisa Gray
President
Ohio Excels

Steve Millard
President & CEO
Greater Akron Chamber of Commerce

Dennis P. Saunier
President & CEO
Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce

Baiju Shah
President & CEO
Greater Cleveland Partnership

Chris Kershner
President & CEO
Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce

Dan Bates
President & CEO
Greater Hamilton Chamber of Commerce

Jed Metzger
President & CEO
Lima/Allen County Chamber of Commerce

Guy Coviello
President & CEO
Youngstown/Warren Regional Chamber

Jim Stout
CEO
Coastal Pet Products, Inc.

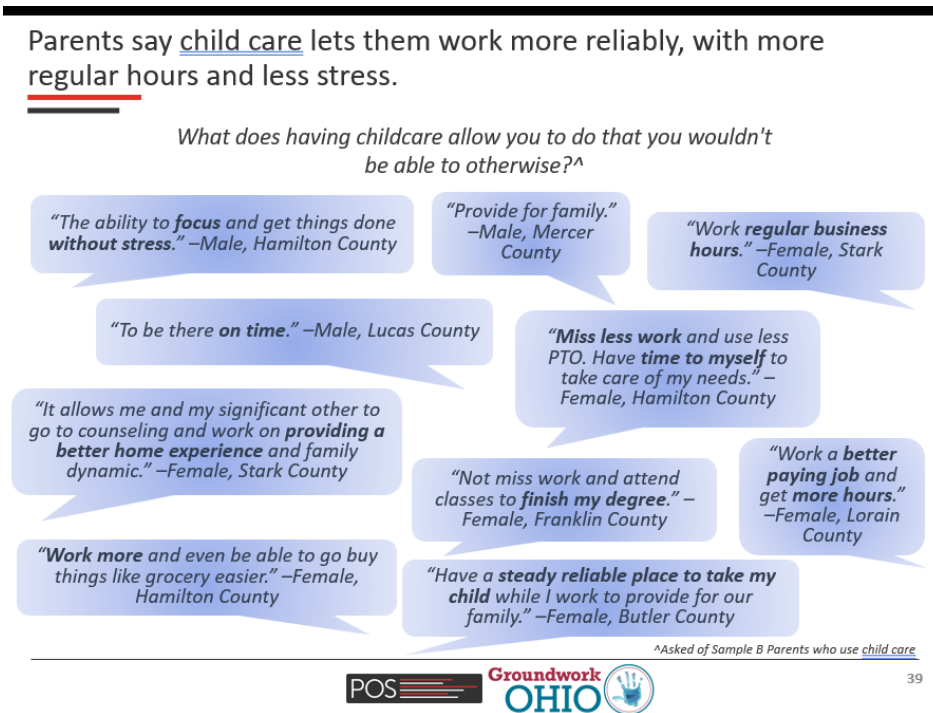
Trishia Hauck
Dayton Facility Manager
Cargill

Megan Riddlebarger
Executive Director
Corp. for Ohio Appalachian Development

Appendix C: Ohio Parent Voices on Child Care

This appendix consists of individual quotes from parents and voters across the state of Ohio.

Figure 5: Parents say child care lets the work more reliably, with more regular hours and less stress.



The following quotes are attributable to parents and voters who participated in the poll by Public Opinion Strategies referenced throughout this testimony:

- "It is nearly impossible to find a good place to send [my] kids because everywhere is full." -Mahoning County Father
- "I depend on my grandparents to help because I can't afford regular child care." - Richland County father
- "My job is only fifteen dollars an hour and daycare is too expensive" -Franklin county voter
- "The cost of daycare is the same as a paycheck," so "it isn't worth it to go back to work." -Cuyahoga County mother
- "My family can't afford it, so my wife had to quit her job to stay home." -Lorain County father

- "A lot of Type A care in my area is full and there's a waiting list and I don't want my children in a house setting type of daycare." -Lucas County mother
- "The demand is greater than the services."- Lucas County father
- "Daycares are completely booked and you're on a waitlist for months unless somebody leaves."- Jefferson County mother
- "There are not even daycares for all the children needing care and the centers have very limited hours."-Seneca County parent
- "Having childcare allows me to miss less work and use less PTO."-Hamilton County mother
- "Having child care allows me to not miss work and attend classes to finish my degree"-Franklin County mother
- "Child care funding means people can go to work and not have to worry about missing work or how they will pay their bills."-Butler County voter
- "Not everyone can afford the best care," the child "should not be punished."- Muskingum County voter
- "Not everyone can afford to have a stay-at-home parent and children need access to high-quality support while parents work."- Lake County mother

The following are quotes attributable to Groundwork Ohio Family Action Network Members:

Learn more about the Network at www.GroundworkOhio.org/familyvoice

- "We live paycheck to paycheck. I've never even physically seen the amount of money it would take for all my young children to attend daycare at the same time."
- "The one-time grants offered by the state of Ohio are nice, but don't help our family's center attract new talent because they can't guarantee funding will exist to permanently raise wages."
- "I am now stuck in the vicious cycle of wanting to work and wanting to be productive, but without access to affordable healthcare and child care, I will not be able to cater to my children."
- "I have a degree in early childhood development, you see, I am not a babysitter I am an educator. I have influenced and educated thousands of children in the span of the 25 years I've worked in child care. Yet, the world does not view me as such, the government doesn't view me as such. I am treated less than a public-school teacher despite completing all the same tasks. I am treated as a babysitter despite providing education and learning experiences. I am paid barely a livable wage, an industry-wide issue. I'm working 40-45 hours per week as a child care Director and teacher. My son who is 17 years old works at Dairy Queen and makes \$1.50 less. The entry-level wage at Amazon is \$20 per hour with no degree, no experience, and no impact on the lives of young children. I say that to say, I now find myself in a hamster wheel that I can't seem to escape."
- "Child care is difficult enough in school settings let alone after school is over but before most people's workday ends. I am lucky to have a work day that ends at 4:30

when other parents can have to work till 6 or 7 pm. Even still, that leaves me having to meet my job responsibilities and find a safe place for my kids for more than 2.5 hours every day. Despite being eligible for child care vouchers through Cuyahoga County, a manager with Cuyahoga County jobs and family services told me in February 2023 that they are so far behind processing applications that they hadn't started on applications submitted in September 2022. I am yet to receive a phone call saying that my vouchers have been approved for the 2022-2023 school year and the school year is going to be over in less than 90 days. This is for a family that has a verified special needs child."

- "I'm currently unemployed. When I was pregnant with my youngest, I looked into child care. And the cost was going to be \$350 per week for just one child, and then \$150 per additional child. I'm essentially still in the same position of not being able to afford rent or food once I've paid for child care."
- "Right now, I make less than minimum wage in my small in-home child care. My family lives on less than \$30,000 a year with my husband and I both working. Each month it gets harder to pay the bills and every month I must answer the question, 'can I afford to keep providing child care?' At any given time, I could be forced to close due to not being able to afford to stay open, which will result in taking yet one more quality child care program away from children and families." -Family Child Care Owner Sabina, OH
- "I had three young children at home ages 3, 4, and 5. Becoming a family child care provider gave me the opportunity to work from home. It began as a temporary job for me, but living in the community that I live in, I quickly saw that there was a need for quality care and a safe place for children to come to." -Family Child Care Professional Mahoning County
- "I had to ask my employer to reduce my wage by \$2/hr. so that I could qualify for childcare." -Groundwork Ohio Family Action Network Parent
- "How can a single mother who makes 200% of the Federal Poverty Level afford to pay for child care?"
- "It's hard to find services for my children with special needs. More funding is needed to support children with special needs like mine."
- "Several families in my groups shared how they qualified for programs and interventions for their children but could not access them due to lack of staffing or availability in the community."
- "A lot of people don't understand that without child care, I cannot continue to work. If I can't continue to work, I can't continue to take care of my kids."

Ohio families demand that their voices be heard and are communicating with policymakers and communities to solve the child care crisis. The following are a sampling of families who have shared their stories and families with Ohio policymakers recently:

_____ moved to amend as follows:

1 After line 160341a, insert:

2 "5CV3 6006A7 ARPA Childcare \$150,000,000 \$0"

3 In line 160347, add \$150,000,000 to fiscal year 2024

4 In line 160376, add \$150,000,000 to fiscal year 2024

5 After line 160806, insert:

6 **"Section 307.230.** ARPA CHILDCARE

7 Of the foregoing appropriation item 6006A7, ARPA Childcare,
8 \$150,000,000 in fiscal year 2024 shall be used by the Ohio
9 Department of Job and Family Services, in consultation with the
10 Department of Children and Youth, to do both of the following:

11 (A) Establish a child care scholarship for critical
12 occupations and other direct service professionals as identified
13 in consultation with the Governor's Office of Workforce
14 Transformation. Individuals awarded scholarships shall have
15 incomes that are less than 200 per cent of the federal poverty
16 level; and

17 (B) Increase access to licensed child care programs for
18 infants and toddlers with priority for those in rural and urban
19 areas and to streamline administrative efficiency of the child

20 care program, in accordance with the program guidelines for the
21 use of these funds provided by the U.S. Department of the
22 Treasury."

23 The motion was _____ agreed to.

24 SYNOPSIS

25 **Department of Job and Family Services**

26 **Sections 307.10 and 307.230**

27 Restores an As Introduced appropriation of \$150,000,000 in
28 FY 2024 in Fund 5CV3 ALI 6006A7, ARPA Childcare. Restores As
29 Introduced language requiring the funds to be used by ODJFS, in
30 consultation with DCY, to (1) establish a child care scholarship
31 for critical occupations and other direct service professionals
32 for individuals with incomes that are less than 200% of the
33 federal poverty level and (2) increase access to licensed child
34 care programs for infants and toddlers with priority for those
35 in rural and urban areas and to streamline administrative
36 efficiency of the child care program.

_____ moved to amend as follows:

1 In line 166862, delete "\$46,500,000 \$55,000,000" and
2 insert "\$54,982,907 \$64,380,802"

3 In line 166878, add \$8,482,907 to fiscal year 2024 and
4 \$9,380,802 to fiscal year 2025

5 In line 166901, add \$8,482,907 to fiscal year 2024 and
6 \$9,380,802 to fiscal year 2025

7 The motion was _____ agreed to.

8 SYNOPSIS

9 **Department of Children and Youth**

10 **Section 423.10**

11 Increases GRF ALI 830403, Help Me Grow, by \$8,482,907 in
12 FY 2024 and \$9,380,802 in FY 2025 (thereby restoring As
13 Introduced appropriation levels).

_____ moved to amend as follows:

1 In line 166876, delete "\$6,250,000 \$6,250,000" and insert
2 "\$11,250,000 \$11,250,000"

3 In line 166878, add \$5,000,000 to each fiscal year

4 In line 166901, add \$5,000,000 to each fiscal year

5 The motion was _____ agreed to.

6 SYNOPSIS

7 **Department of Children and Youth**

8 **Section 423.10**

9 Increases GRF ALI 830505, Early Childhood Mental Health
10 (ECMH), by \$5,000,000 in each fiscal year (thereby restoring As
11 Introduced appropriation levels).