



November 13th, 2024

Chairman Cirino, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Ohio Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony to Senate Bill 273, which establishes the Child Care Cred Program within the Department of Children and Youth. This innovative program will address a crucial need for affordable and accessible childcare by allowing the cost to be shared among eligible employees, participating employers, and the state.

UC Health proudly serves as the only super safety net hospital and academic medical center for the Greater Cincinnati region. We proudly provide world-class care to all injured and critically ill patients in our community. Our tripartite mission is to provide lifesaving clinical care, generate innovative research, and educate the next generations of medical providers all underscore our goal to improve the comprehensive care and access to world class medicine regardless of any patient's ability to pay.

Access to affordable and high-quality childcare remains a significant barrier for many Ohioans, particularly those who want to participate in the workforce and in the healthcare industry. Affordable childcare access challenges frequently impact low- to middle-income families, pushing some parents to leave the workforce entirely, or rely on lower-quality options. Ohio families pay an average of \$10,000 to \$15,000 per year for childcare. This financial strain has led many parents, particularly women, to leave the workforce or reduce their hours, resulting in economic losses not only for those families but also for Ohio's economy. Senate Bill 273, through its proposed tri-share model, would alleviate some of this financial pressure and enable families to afford better care options.

The financial strain caused by lack of access to affordable childcare has led many parents, particularly women, to leave the workforce or reduce their hours, resulting in economic losses not only for those families but also for Ohio's economy. Without financial support or subsidies, healthcare workers in lower-paid positions find it challenging to balance the cost of childcare with their earnings. This financial strain can impact recruitment efforts as potential employees weigh the costs of entering or remaining in the healthcare field against the expenses tied to child care.

On behalf of UC Health, we strongly support Senate Bill 273 and respectfully request the Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee favorably report this legislation.

Sincerely,

Rikki Smith
Director of Benefits & Retirement
UC Health