



OHIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

February 24, 2025

The Honorable Andrea White
Chair, Ohio House Children and Human Services Committee
77 South High Street – 11th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Re: **Ohio Chamber Support of Childcare Provider Recruitment and Mentorship Grant Program**

Dear Chair White,

The Ohio Chamber of Commerce is pleased to support the proposed budget amendment creating the **Child Care Provider Recruitment and Mentorship Grant Program**. One of Ohio's biggest workforce throttles is the lack of affordable and accessible childcare throughout the state. Soaring childcare costs are exacerbated by the limited availability of childcare options. As outlined in the amendment, the program would involve a \$3.2 million appropriation for FY26 to *"increase, through recruitment efforts, Ohio's supply of licensed childcare providers, especially in underserved areas or communities, and to assist entities and individuals recruited under the program in establishing and operating childcare businesses and adopting business practices to best serve the needs of Ohio's families"*.

This amendment would cultivate in-home options in childcare deserts and aligns with one of the Ohio Chamber's recent budget requests of the DeWine Administration. 60% of rural Ohioans and 39% of overall Ohioans live in a childcare desert, which is a census tract containing more than 50 children under age five where no childcare providers are available, or any tract with more than three times as many children as licensed childcare slots.

In rural Ohio particularly, capacity needs may be best met by stimulating the creation of more in-home providers. In other states, certain childcare solutions companies enter high-need areas to recruit new home-based providers, provide training to help them develop their own programs, and ensure these new providers flourish through ongoing guidance. These types of companies can harness the potential of Ohio's parents, educators, and retirees by walking them through the licensing process, guiding any retrofit of their homes, and helping them navigate our state's provider requirements to grow more capacity.

Ohio must stimulate increased childcare supply to provide for more options and stabilize costs to working families. The Ohio Chamber of Commerce strongly supports the creation of the **Child Care Provider Recruitment and Mentorship Grant Program** and encourages its incorporation into the upcoming state operating budget. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Carfagna".

Rick Carfagna
Senior Vice President, Government Affairs
Ohio Chamber of Commerce

Cc: The Honorable Jodi Salvo, Vice Chair, Ohio House Children and Human Services Committee
The Honorable Crystal Lett, Ranking Member, Ohio House Children and Human Services Committee