

Children and Human Services Committee

March 10, 2025

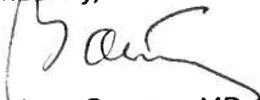
Chair White, Vice Chair Salvo, Ranking Member Lett and distinguished members of the Children and Human Services Committee,

My name is Barbara Oettgen, MD. I am writing today in support of House Bill 7. As a pediatrician at Nationwide Children's Hospital whose primary clinical responsibility is to provide primary care to children and youth in foster care, I have seen firsthand the financial strain that daycare costs place on both kinship and foster families. Many families express their dismay when they learn that they do not receive funding for childcare, especially those who are kinship providers. Recently, I saw a young single woman whose dream and passion had always been to care for children in foster care. She was really struggling to make ends meet and was trying to patch together daycare with family members. She had been under the impression that she would receive some assistance with daycare costs. We are very lucky to have some very talented and amazing foster and kinship families in OH and as a clinic we try to do everything we can to support those families. Having publicly funded childcare would be such a wonderful added support.

We know that children can overall do better in placements where they are already familiar with their caregiver. I wonder how many additional families we would be able to recruit with the knowledge that they would receive this support, especially among potential kinship providers.

I strongly urge the Committee to pass this legislation. I appreciate all that you do for the children of Ohio, especially our most vulnerable children- those in out-of-home care.

Sincerely,



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