



OHIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

March 10, 2025

Representative Andrea White
Chair, House Children and Human Services Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Chairwoman White:

My name is Justin Barnes, and I'm the Vice President of Government Affairs for the Ohio Chamber of Commerce. As you may know, for over 130 years, the Ohio Chamber has served as the state's leading business advocate, and we represent over 8,000 companies that do business in Ohio. Our mission is to aggressively champion free enterprise, economic competitiveness, and growth for the benefit of all Ohioans. As part of our mission, we seek to make Ohio the best place in the country for businesses to operate and grow.

I write in support of House Bill 7, which would make foster and kinship caregivers categorically eligible for publicly-funded childcare (PFCC). Foster and kinship caregivers who are working are challenged with the same childcare challenges as other parents and caregivers when trying to access childcare. Childcare availability results in tough decisions that not only influences their ability to stay in the workforce, but often deters them from taking on the responsibility of caring for children who need the loving support of foster and kinship placements.

We want to thank you and Representative Ray for your work on this legislation. This is an important issue that will help keep working parents engaged in the workforce and more fully contribute to their communities and to the state's economy. We look forward to working with members of this committee and the whole House to advance this legislation.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide support for House Bill 7.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Justin Barnes".

Justin Barnes
Vice President, Government Affairs
Ohio Chamber of Commerce