



Safe Children, Stable Families, Supportive Communities

House Children and Human Services Committee  
Interested Party Testimony on HB 532  
November 19, 2025  
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Good morning, Chair White, Vice Chair Salvo, Ranking Member Lett, and members of the House Children and Human Services Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this interested party testimony on HB 532, *Regards custody of children who cannot be released to a parent*. My name is Mary Wachtel, and I am the Director of Public Policy for the Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO). PCSAO is a membership-driven association of Ohio's 88 county Public Children Services Agencies that advocates for sound public policy, promotes program excellence, and builds public value for safe children, stable families, and supportive communities.

I want to start by thanking Rep. Miller for discussing this issue and bill with the three PCSAs in his district and for his willingness to continue that dialogue. We are committed to working with him, law enforcement, and other partners to reach our shared end goal.

**A strong partnership between law enforcement and the children services is critical.**

Both systems share a commitment to child safety and have a role to play to ensure that children are safe. Several tools are currently in place to support this partnership:

- 1) Law enforcement has the ability to take a child into custody under certain circumstances, including those this bill is intended to address, via [Juvenile Rule 6](#), (rooted in ORC 2151.31). When this happens, the PCSA is contacted and can take

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action. We are aware that not all law enforcement agencies use JR6 and that prosecutors and courts vary in what they require for processing JR6 complaints. However, many PCSAs -- especially border counties, counties on main transit routes, and counties that are home to major tourist attractions--have shared that this process, while not perfect, works well in their counties.

- 2) PCSAs are required to establish a local Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with key community partners, including all law enforcement jurisdictions within the county. Many PCSAs spell out how they work with law enforcement in the MOU. We suggest leveraging the MOU and other best practices to help all counties strengthen the PCSA/law enforcement partnership.

We look forward to continued dialogue with Rep. Miller and other stakeholders on this bill to achieve our shared goal of keeping children safe. Thank you. I am happy to answer questions.