



**Representative Tom Young**  
*37th Ohio House District*

**Sponsor Testimony for HB 647, Child Care Accountability**

---

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 sponsor testimony on House Bill 647. This legislation is a proactive step toward ensuring that Ohio's Publicly Funded Child Care program remains a responsible and accountable steward of taxpayer dollars. Under current law, the Department of Children and Youth is mandated to transition Publicly Funded Childcare payments to an enrollment-based model by July 2028. While this was previously driven by federal rules, a recent shift in federal policy now allows states to return to attendance-based payments.

H.B. 647 capitalizes on this flexibility. By requiring DCY to calculate payments based on actual attendance rather than mere enrollment, we ensure that public funds are paying for services actually rendered to Ohio's children.

To support this transition and bolster program integrity, this bill focuses on three critical pillars:

1. Enhanced Accountability and Enforcement,
2. Investigatory Oversight, and
3. Data-driven Integrity

The bill explicitly authorizes DCY to suspend or terminate a provider's contract if there is reason to suspect the misuse of public funds or intent to commit fraud. Furthermore, it allows for the immediate suspension of a license, without a prior hearing, if such activity is suspected. This ensures that bad actors cannot continue to access public funds while an investigation is pending.

Additionally, H.B. 647 empowers the Attorney General to investigate criminal or civil violations of the childcare law upon requests from state leaders or upon becoming aware of improper activity. The Attorney General is further authorized to prosecute these actions directly or refer them to local prosecutors, creating a robust safety net against systemic fraud.

Finally, this bill reallocates \$5 million to DCY for enhanced data analytics. These funds will be used to perform automated attendance reviews, allowing the state to detect patterns of misuse and ensure that the automated childcare system accurately reflects the care being provided. House Bill 647 is about transparency and efficiency. It ensures that our childcare system supports working families while maintaining the highest standards of fiscal responsibility. Thank you for your time. We are happy to answer any questions.