

# **OHIO COUNCIL OF YWCAs**

## **PROPONENT TESTIMONY HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE HB 96 – FY26/27 STATE OPERATING BUDGET MARCH 11, 2025**

Chair Stewart, Vice Chair Dovilla, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the House Finance Committee. I am Elizabeth Brown, President and Chief Executive Officer of the YWCA of Columbus and a member of the Ohio Council of YWCAs. Our Council is made up of the 13 YWCA chapters across the State of Ohio.

I am here to provide proponent testimony in favor of HB96, which earmarks \$1.5 million per year to support specific programming in YWCA chapters that provide direct services to families, women, and children victimized by gender-based violence throughout the State, and to continue and expand community outreach through youth development and prevention programs. More specifically, the bill would support Council programs that:

- Prevent domestic violence,
- Support victims of domestic violence,
- Provide trauma-informed services for survivors of domestic violence, homeless women and families and
- Support outreach and development opportunities through youth development and prevention programming.

These services would include emergency shelters, crisis hotline support and non-residential services. We provide wraparound services that address gender-based violence, including trauma-informed support for survivors such as counseling, case management, substance abuse services and prevention education in the community.

Ohio YWCA member organizations reached more than 90,000 women, girls and family members last year through our programming. In addition to TANF funding, we receive federal support as well as private investment that helps us meet ongoing needs of the communities and the vulnerable populations we serve. While we are grateful for the support in the Governor's Budget, we are seeking an additional investment of \$500,000 per fiscal year as contained in the amendment attached to our testimony.(HC0575). This additional investment will increase our ability to serve more individuals in need.

Each year, demand for the services provided by Ohio's YWCAs grows, as our programming is much vaster than the two areas for which we are seeking funding. Our major programs include subject matters that address human trafficking and gender violence prevention, economic development, leadership, family development (including teen family development), health and wellness, and senior community service.

Programs are curriculum-based and outcome-centered, and we sustain active service partnerships and referral channels throughout our respective communities. In fact, YWCA chapters collectively partner and collaborate with over 45 school districts and alternative schools statewide for programming and after school care. Finally, we provide a variety of educational opportunities for youth as part of wrap-around services.

YWCA Columbus has housed women in need since its inception in 1886. Our services today include housing vulnerable families in our Family Center for homeless families, our permanent supportive housing in the Women's Residency Program for women with disabilities, and child enrichment in our shelter and afterschool programs in Westerville, Gahanna, and the United Schools Network. These programs focus on supporting among the most at-risk in the greater Columbus area. We provide a trauma-informed curriculum for our early childhood education center within the Family Center, and incorporate trauma-informed programming and counseling in both the Center and our permanent supportive housing facility. We combat homelessness and support our community through aiding in the transition into the housing market for women and families, as well as develop safe spaces for at-risk children for education and access to stability.

We thank Governor DeWine for his investment targeted to areas in social services to protect the most vulnerable Ohioans. In order to meet the increased need in our state, we would seek support of the attached amendment (HC0575) to invest an additional \$500,000 per fiscal year for a total investment of \$2,000,000 per year to support our critical mission.

Chair Sewart and members of the House Finance Committee, I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

HC0575

H. B. No. 96

As Introduced

\_\_\_\_\_ moved to amend as follows:

In line 106704, delete "\$1,500,000" and insert "\$2,000,000"

1

The motion was \_\_\_\_\_ agreed to.

SYNOPSIS

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**Department of Job and Family Services**

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**Section 307.80**

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Increases the earmark in Fund 3V60 ALI 600689, TANF Block  
Grant, to the Ohio Council of YWCAs by \$500,000.

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Legislative Service Commission



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# COUNCIL OF OHIO YWCA'S ROSTER

**YWCA ALLIANCE**  
**KORENA POW INTERIM CEO**  
239 E. Market Street  
Alliance, OH 44601  
Work: 330.823.1840  
Email: [korena.pow@allianceywca.org](mailto:korena.pow@allianceywca.org)

**YWCA CANTON**  
**SHANA SMITH CEO**  
231 Sixth Street NE  
Canton, OH 44702  
Work: 330.453.7644  
Cell: 330.605.5970  
Email: [ssmith@ywcacanton.org](mailto:ssmith@ywcacanton.org)

**YWCA GREATER CINCINNATI**  
**RICKELL HOWARD SMITH CEO**  
898 Walnut Street  
Cincinnati, OH 45202  
Work: 513.361.2120  
Cell:  
Email: [rsmith@ywcacin.org](mailto:rsmith@ywcacin.org)

**YWCA GREATER CLEVELAND**  
**HELEN FORBES FIELDS CEO**  
4019 Prospect Avenue  
Cleveland, OH 44103  
Work: 216.881.6878  
Cell: 216.953.0271  
Email: [hffields@ywcaofcleveland.org](mailto:hffields@ywcaofcleveland.org)

**YWCA COLUMBUS**  
**ELIZABETH BROWN CEO**  
65 S. Fourth Street  
Columbus, OH 43215  
Work: 614.627.1209  
Cell: 614.397.9259  
Email: [ebrown@ywcacolumbus.org](mailto:ebrown@ywcacolumbus.org)

**YWCA DAYTON**  
**TERRA FOX WILLIAMS CEO**  
141 W. Third Street  
Dayton, OH 45402  
Work: 937.461.5550  
Cell: 937-305-3672  
Email: [twilliams@ywcadayton.org](mailto:twilliams@ywcadayton.org)

**YWCA ELYRIA**  
**YWCA LORAIN**  
**JEANINE DONALDSON CEO**  
318 West Avenue  
Elyria, OH 44035  
Work: 440.322.6300  
Cell:  
Email: [jpd@elyriaywca.org](mailto:jpd@elyriaywca.org)

**YWCA HAMILTON**  
**WENDY WATERS-CONNELL CEO**  
1570 Grand Blvd.  
Hamilton, OH 45011  
Work: 513.856.9800  
Cell: 513.276.3749  
Email: [wwatersconnell@ywcHamilton.com](mailto:wwatersconnell@ywcHamilton.com)

**YWCA MAHONING VALLEY**  
**LEAH MERRITT CEO**  
25 W. Rayen Avenue  
Youngstown, OH 44502  
Work: 330.746.6361  
Cell: 724.866.0946  
Email: [lmerritt@mvywca.org](mailto:lmerritt@mvywca.org)

**YWCA NORTHWEST OHIO**  
**LISA MCDUFFIE CEO**  
1018 Jefferson Avenue  
Toledo, OH 43604  
Work: 419.241.3235  
Cell: 419.266.0858  
Email: [lmcduffie@ywcawno.org](mailto:lmcduffie@ywcawno.org)

**YWCA PIQUA**  
**LEESA BAKER CEO**  
418 N. Wayne Street  
Piqua, OH 45356  
Work: 937.773.3326  
Email: [lbaker@ywcapiqua.com](mailto:lbaker@ywcapiqua.com)

**YWCA VAN WERT COUNTY**  
**KIMBERLY LAUDICK CEO**  
408 E. Main Street  
Van Wert, OH 45891  
Work: 419.238.6639 ext 102  
Cell: 419-203-3046  
Email: [klaudick@ywcavanwertcounty.org](mailto:klaudick@ywcavanwertcounty.org)

# COUNCIL OF OHIO YWCA'S ROSTER

*There are 13 YWCAs in Ohio, led by 12 CEOs.*

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**DANNI CHILES – TREASURER**  
YWCA VAN WERT COUNTY  
Work: 419-238-6639 ext 101  
Cell: 419-771-9564  
Email: [dchiles@ywcavanwert.org](mailto:dchiles@ywcavanwert.org)