



OHIO CHILD SUPPORT

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House Finance Committee

Sub HB96

Written Interested Party Testimony

Amy Roehrenbeck, Esq.

Ohio Child Support Professionals Association

April 3, 2025

Chairman Stewart, Vice Chair Dovilla, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written IP testimony on Sub.HB96 on behalf of the Ohio Child Support Professionals Association (OCSPA), a membership organization of county child support enforcement agencies (CSEAs).

We reviewed the substitute bill and want to share our concerns about the changes to RC 3119.01 and 3119.07 (and 801.220) relating to the calculation, collection, and distribution of child support payments to families. These provisions are unclear and could completely upend the way child support is ordered and paid in Ohio, creating duplicate processes, confusion for parents and caretakers, unnecessary and burdensome administrative requirements for agencies, and increased paperwork and responsibilities for employers.

Under current law, child support is calculated using an income share approach, where each parent's percentage of the guideline amount for support is calculated, using income, health insurance, childcare, and other factors. One parent is identified to pay support (obligor), and one parent is identified to receive support (obligee). The obligor's portion of the child support order is determined and payable to the obligee. The obligee's portion of the child support order is determined but is not payable and instead deemed spent in the home. When a third-party caretaker is the primary caregiver for a child, both parents may be identified as obligors paying support to the caretaker.

Under the sub bill, the long-standing definition of "obligor" is changed and muddled by saying an obligor is a person who is required to pay support but also could be a person who receives support. These proposed provisions appear to make BOTH parents' guideline obligations payable to one another, requiring CSEAs to collect support from BOTH parents, not just the obligor. This means CSEAs would be required to send income withholding orders to both parents' employers (if they have them) and child support would be withheld from BOTH parents' wages. Collections would then be sent to one or both of

the parties (which could result in having parents pay support to have us turn around and send them that money back). This would result in duplicative work on nearly **every** child support case in the state of Ohio moving forward (Note—Ohio has the 4th largest caseload nationwide, with over 750,000 cases) and more interference into families' lives to comply with these new provisions.

Ohio currently contracts with a vendor to collect child support payments from employers and parents. The vendor works to make sure those payments are noted in the Support Enforcement Tracking System (SETS)—the statewide child support database—and then distributed to the parent who should receive the support (currently, the obligee, or a caretaker). The sub bill change could DOUBLE the number of payments that will need to be processed by the vendor if CSEAs are required to collect support from both parents to effectuate an offset of support, which would substantially increase the cost of this contract.

Finally, it's important to note that employers are one of the biggest partners to the child support program, collecting between 70-75% of all child support paid in Ohio each year. Under the provisions of the sub bill, these employers will have thousands and thousands of additional income withholding orders to process, adding additional burdens to the employer community.

For these reasons, we ask the committee to please respectfully reconsider these provisions. We ask for your support of amendment HC_136_2219 to remove these provisions from the bill. As noted above, these provisions could completely upend the way child support is ordered and paid in Ohio, creating duplicate processes, confusion, and delay for parents and caretakers to receive support, unnecessary and burdensome administrative requirements for agencies, and increased paperwork and responsibilities for employers.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. Please reach out if you have any questions.