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Brian Lorenz
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Chairman Thomas, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Isaacsohn, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 323.

This bill addresses a serious and heartbreaking issue: the sexual assault of minors in the workplace. As lawmakers, one of our most fundamental responsibilities is to protect our most vulnerable — and that includes the young people who are just beginning to enter the workforce.

House Bill 323 would require employers in Ohio to report suspected sexual assault involving minor employees to the appropriate authorities. Specifically, it amends sections of the Revised Code to ensure that when an employer has reasonable cause to suspect that a minor in their employment has been sexually assaulted, they are legally obligated to report it — just as teachers, doctors, and other mandated reporters already are under Ohio law.

The inspiration for this bill came after hearing real stories — stories where young workers were taken advantage of and their trauma was made worse by silence or inaction. No child should have to fear going to work, and no employer should ever look the other way when faced with signs of abuse.

Let me be clear: this bill is not about adding red tape or making life harder for responsible business owners. It's about ensuring that adults in positions of authority — including those in the workplace — take action when something is clearly wrong. Most employers would instinctively do the right thing. House Bill 323 ensures the law expects them to.

By adding this safeguard, we are creating a culture of accountability — one that says protecting our kids is not optional.

I believe this is a common-sense, bipartisan measure, and I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to see it through.

Thank you for your time, and I'm happy to answer any questions.