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Gary Click
State Representative

Committees
Community Revitalization
Ways and Means
Education
Children and Human Resources

Sponsor Testimony
Ohio House Ways and Means Committee
H.B. 87

Chair Roemer, Vice-Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Troy, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, good morning, and thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on HB 87, the Ohio STORK Act.

This legislation would provide Strategic Tax Opportunities for Raising Kids, hence, the acronym STORK.

As state legislators we have many responsibilities, two of the most important being:

- (1) Representing the needs of our constituents and
- (2) Making Ohio the **best state** in the nation to move to, live, and raise a family

As the cost of living continues to skyrocket across the country, it is our job to find ways to lower taxes, support Ohioans, and encourage people from other states to become Buckeyes.

House Bill 87 accomplishes these goals in two tangible ways:

1. First: HB 87 eases financial strains by allowing Ohio parents to claim their conceived child for a tax exemption during the year that he or she is conceived, rather than the year that the child is born. Currently, families are unable to claim their children as dependents until after they are born, but we all know that new parents experience a multitude of expenses *prior to* the birth of their precious child.

According to a study published by the Kaiser Family Foundation, the cost of having a baby in the United States was almost \$20,000 dollars in 2022, and inflation has only exacerbated that number.¹ Forbes reports that the United States is the most expensive nation in which to become a parent.² It is unconscionable that our country, the United States of America, should be the most expensive place in the world to have a baby. This legislation helps address this issue by enabling parents to use more of their hard-earned money to support their daily living and ensuring that the expenses that parents pay for their dependent child before birth are not overlooked by the state of Ohio.

2. Secondly: H.B. 87 would exempt various childcare items from sales and use taxes, including infant clothing, toys, pacifiers and teething rings, baby monitors, bassinets and play yards, and breastfeeding items.

For Ohio families living paycheck to paycheck or struggling under the increased burden of their property taxes, or for a single mom who is just trying to make enough money to put food on the table, this simple tax exemption will make a world of difference.

Am. Sub. H.B. 33, Ohio's Operating Budget from the 135th General Assembly, included several exemptions related to children and childcare, such as diapers, therapeutic and preventative creams and wipes, child restraints and booster seats, and cribs. The intent of H.B. 87 is to build upon and fully implement the intent of Sub. H.B. 33 to better support the needs of mothers, parents, and families in Ohio.

We all know that the lives of citizens across the country have become increasingly difficult due to the devastating impacts of inflation. As Ohioans, we have shared in these experiences. As state representatives with exceedingly diverse districts across the state, there is **one primary request** that **all** of us have received from our constituents: "Please lower taxes and do everything you can to make life in Ohio more affordable."

House Bill 87 does just that – in a simple but significant way.

I invite you to join me in supporting this important legislation to help

make the Buckeye state the best place to move to, live, and raise a family.

Thank you for the opportunity to present House Bill 87 for your consideration. Representative Klopfenstein and I are happy to take your questions.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gary Click". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

State Representative Gary Click
Ohio House District 88

