Ohio House of Representatives

Testimony for House Bill 464

State Representative Tracy Richardson, District 86

Senate Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety Committee

May 13, 2026

Good morning Chair Johnson, Vice Chair Wilson, Ranking Member Weinstein, and members of the Senate Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 464.

I am proud to bring this legislation before you because it serves those who serve us- our military families. Every two to three years, military families pack up their lives and relocate to a new community, often across state lines. Each move brings with it new schools, new employers, and new systems to navigate. For many military spouses, one of the most persistent challenges is finding meaningful work and reliable childcare amidst this constant change. House Bill 464 offers a small but meaningful solution to that challenge by reducing unnecessary bureaucratic barriers while maintaining strong safety standards for Ohio's children.

House Bill 464 is companion legislation to Senator Roegner's Senate Bill 218. The bill was developed in consultation with the United States Department of War and the Ohio Department of Children and Youth. Its purpose is simple: to exempt family childcare providers who are already certified by any branch of the United States Armed Forces from having to obtain a duplicative state license in order to operate in Ohio.

Currently, the Department of War certifies its family childcare providers through a comprehensive process that is both rigorous and continuous. Certification requirements include background checks for every adult residing in the home, completion of at least 40 hours of orientation, 24 hours of annual professional training, liability insurance coverage of $500,000, and unannounced monthly home visits as well as annual multidisciplinary safety, fire, and health inspections. These federal requirements not only meet, but exceed, the standards imposed by Ohio's licensure system through the Department of Children and Youth.

Despite these high standards, military-certified providers who move to Ohio are often required to repeat our state licensing process. This includes new paperwork, training verification, and background checks, even though they have already been vetted and

monitored under the DoW system. This duplication can delay or prevent qualified providers from offering care to families who need it most.

House Bill 464 removes this barrier by adding Department of Defense certified family childcare providers to the list of programs exempt from the state's licensure requirements. The exemption is narrow, carefully tailored, and ensures that only those who meet the rigorous DoW certification standards are eligible. Importantly, this bill does not reduce oversight or compromise child safety, it recognizes the robust system that already exists at the federal level.

Across the country, twenty-one states have already enacted similar exemptions, and at least seven others, including California, Texas, Illinois, Florida, and North Carolina, are currently considering the same policy. With passage of House Bill 464, Ohio would join this growing coalition of states supporting military families by aligning our regulations with federal standards and removing unnecessary red tape.

This legislation strengthens Ohio's commitment to being a military-friendly state. The state should be a place where service members and their families can live, work, and raise their children without facing undue hardship. By supporting this bill, we send a clear message: Ohio welcomes our military families, values their contributions, and will continue to lead with policies that reflect gratitude and respect for their service.

Thank you for your consideration of House Bill 464. I respectfully ask for your favorable support and would be happy to answer any questions you may have.