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**Ohio Senate Finance Committee
Amended Substitute H.B. 96
Lynanne Gutierrez, President & CEO
Groundwork Ohio
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Chair Cirino, Vice Chair Chavez, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I'm Lynanne Gutierrez and I am the President & CEO of Groundwork Ohio. We are the state's leading early learning and maternal and young child health advocates, focused on the healthy development of children from prenatal to age five, and their families.

Working families in Ohio are doing everything they can to stay afloat, stay strong, and hold things together. They are counting on Governor DeWine's bold, transformative proposal that invests in early learning and child care, maternal and infant health, and a new state Child Tax Credit to support young children and working families.

The Senate's proposal does not include a Child Tax Credit, fails to make critical investments in early childhood programs and essential health services, and disinvests in child care and the health care of Ohio's youngest children. As you consider your priorities in this bill, we respectfully urge you to restore the following cuts to the Governor's proposal and existing spending levels:

- **Child Care:** *RESTORE publicly funded child care eligibility to 160% of FPL and RESTORE the Child Care Choice Voucher program to \$75M in FY26 and \$150M in FY27.*
- **Economic Stability:** *RESTORE the proposed refundable Child Tax Credit of up to \$1,000 per child under age 7.*
- **Home Visiting:** *RESTORE \$26 million in proposed new investment in this evidence-based programming.*
- **Infant Vitality:** *RESTORE \$4 million in community and local faith-based programs.*
- **Medicaid Access Babies:** *RESTORE existing law requiring multi-year continuous Medicaid enrollment for babies ages 0-3 championed by House leaders last budget cycle.*
- **Lead Poisoning:** *RESTORE funding for the Lead Safe Home and Lead Abatement programs within the Ohio Department of Health and RESTORE the Lead Abatement Tax Credit.*
- **Early Learning & Literacy:** *RESTORE \$16 million in increased funding for Part-C Early Intervention and RESTORE \$4 million in increased funding for the Governor's Imagination Library.*

Investing in young children and working families is one of the smartest decisions Ohio can make. Thank you for your consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions