



Gloria Blevins
Black Child Development Institute - Ohio

June 5, 2025

Ohio Senate Finance Committee

Chairperson Cirino, Vice Chair Chavez, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Gloria Blevins, and I proudly serve as the President and Executive Director of the Black Child Development Institute – Ohio. I submit this testimony to strongly urge you to restore the Governor’s budget proposal that prioritizes critical investments in early childhood, child care, publicly funded child care (PFCC), healthy housing, and maternal health. These foundational areas are essential to the well-being and success of families across Ohio.

As an organization dedicated to advancing the education, care, and health of Ohio’s children and their families, we witness daily how systemic support can change lives. Every family in Ohio deserves access to programs and resources that meet their children’s essential developmental and health needs. A strong, sustained investment in these areas not only nurtures thriving children but also strengthens our workforce and overall economy.

We respectfully urge you to reinstate and protect funding in the following key areas:

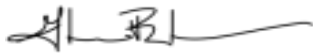
- **Child Care Access:** Restore PFCC eligibility to 160% of the Federal Poverty Level and reinstate the Child Care Choice Voucher program with funding of \$75M in FY26 and \$150M in FY27.
- **Economic Security:** Restore the proposed refundable Child Tax Credit of up to \$1,000 per child under age 7.
- **Home Visiting Programs:** Restore \$22.5 million for evidence-based home visiting initiatives.
- **Infant & Maternal Mortality Prevention:** Reinstall infant vitality funds at \$7.5M per fiscal year.

- **Medicaid for Mothers & Babies:** Maintain continuous Medicaid coverage for babies from 0 - 3 to and *remove restrictions on doula services for Medicaid-eligible women.*
- **Lead Safety:** Restore funding for the Lead Safe Home and Lead Abatement programs at the Ohio Department of Health.
- **Early Learning & Literacy:** Reinstate the integration of the science of reading, additional support for the Governor's Imagination Library, and the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment.

These investments are not optional, they are vital. By restoring this funding, we can create a more sustainable, resilient, and supportive environment for all Ohio children and their families.

Thank you for your time, leadership, and dedication to Ohio's future. I welcome the opportunity to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully Submitted,



Gloria Blevins, SHRM-CP
President & Executive Director