

June 4, 2025

Ohio Senate Finance Committee

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of investing in Ohio's children, families, and early childhood educators. My name is Chad Nunamaker, and I am the Executive Director and Communication Manager for the Southwest Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children. We are a proud state-level affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, serving Cincinnati, Columbus, Dayton, and 16 surrounding counties. We believe that all young children thrive and learn in a society dedicated to ensuring they reach their full potential.



We applaud Governor Mike DeWine’s goal of making Ohio the best place in the nation to start and raise a family and his creation of the Department of Children and Youth, which reflects our state’s commitment to supporting children’s healthy development and well-being. We also greatly appreciate Director Kara Wentz, whose leadership of the Department of Children and Youth has brought forward key outcome areas that support children and youth, empower families, and uplift communities. As someone who has worked in the early childhood field for many years, I know firsthand how important it is to support young children and working families. I urge you to restore the following executive budget proposals that represent essential investments in Ohio’s children, families, and early childhood educators:

- **Early Intervention (Part C):** Restore the executive proposal that increases funding for Early Intervention.
- **Home Visiting/Help Me Grow:** Restore the executive proposal of \$63,591,050 in FY 26 and \$85,521,869 in FY 27.
- **Infant Vitality:** Restore the executive proposal that appropriates not less than \$7,500,000 to support maternal health programs through community and faith-based providers.
- **Publicly Funded Child Care (PFCC):** Restore the executive proposal that increases maximum income for a family's initial eligibility for PFCC at 160% of the federal poverty level (FPL) and 300% FPL for continued eligibility.
- **Child Care Choice Voucher Program:** Restore the executive proposal that maintains and expands the program.
- **TANF Block Grant:** Restore the executive proposal that allocates \$427,850,000 for FY 26 and FY 27.
- **Child Tax Credit:** Restore the executive proposal to create a refundable child tax credit, providing financial relief to families during the critical early years of a child's development.
- **Imagination Library:** Restore the executive proposal that increases funding by \$2M per FY.

These policies support children's development and Ohio's families, workforce, and long-term economic future. Together, we can ensure Ohio is a place where every child, every family, and every early childhood educator can thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, please reach out.

Sincerely,

Ross "Chad" Nunamaker, MSE  
Executive Director & Communication Manager  
Southwest Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children  
chad.nunamaker@swoaeyc.org