



Chair Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Liston, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak today in defense of Addiction Treatment Funding, a lifeline for countless Ohio families.

Wayne County's Drug Court and Recovery Court participants are proof that when we invest in treatment, we don't just change lives, we rebuild families. This funding supports many parents battling addiction, who, with structured recovery programming, are working to regain custody of their children rather than being lost in the cycle of relapse and separation. Cutting this funding would jeopardize their progress, destabilize families, and further strain our child welfare system, which is already overwhelmed by placement crises.

At the heart of this issue are Drug-Endangered Children (DEC), the silent victims of addiction. Their futures depend on early intervention, prevention, and family-centered recovery solutions—efforts that Wayne County is actively addressing through a new DEC training initiative, made possible by Addiction Treatment Program (ATP) funding.

Led by child welfare experts, law enforcement, clinicians, and medical professionals, this program equips parents with critical education on how substance use affects their children, while providing evidence-based strategies to heal, rebuild trust, and create safer, more stable homes. When we invest in recovery, we are not just supporting individuals—we are breaking generational cycles of addiction and protecting the next generation.

Addiction is not just a criminal justice issue—it is a child welfare issue, and when we remove access to treatment, we increase the number of children entering foster care, deepen the strain on our courts, and make reunification nearly impossible. Without continued investment, we risk losing the critical interventions that keep families together before separation becomes permanent.

Preserving this funding means giving parents in recovery the resources they need to regain custody and create safe homes for their children. Cutting it means turning our backs on struggling families and leaving children trapped in instability. Recovery is possible, reunification is achievable, but only if we commit to treatment-first solutions that disrupt the cycle of addiction rather than perpetuating it.

I urge you to protect the 422 Criminal Justice Line and preserve the Addiction Treatment Program, because when we invest in recovery, we invest in families, futures, and the next generation of Ohio's children.

Thank you for your time and careful deliberation on this important matter.

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