



Hearcel F. Craig

State Senator

15th District

Sponsor Testimony for Senate Bill 58

Ohio Senate Judiciary Committee

February 19th, 2025

Thank you, Chair Manning, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and other members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, for allowing me to testify about Senate Bill 58. I am honored to bring forth this important legislation with my joint sponsor, Senator Reynolds.

In the state of Ohio, we allow for grandparents to have the responsibility of executing caretaker affidavits, allowing them to have custody of their grandchildren, if their parent cannot be located. We have introduced this bill to expand the eligibility for caretakers and allow for more children to be housed and cared for by direct family members. Stepparents, uncles, aunts, siblings and first cousins could have the ability to take custody of a family member, ensuring that our youth are not sent to foster care. This bill will allow families to stay together and decrease the burden on the crowded foster care system.

This legislation would also allow nonrelative adults who have a bond with the child to be classified as caretakers. The process for designating caretakers and ensuring the safety of these children will remain the same. This bill does not change the responsibilities inherent to caretakers, but rather allows for more individuals to be considered caretakers. This bill is an important step to providing caring and safe homes for fostered children.

Chair Manning and members of the committee, thank you very much for the consideration of this bill and the chance for my colleague, Senator Reynolds and I to provide testimony. We would be happy to take any questions at this time.