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Interested Party Testimony of Ryann Levering-White, Esq.  
Ohio Child Support Professionals Association  
SB174  
October 8, 2015

Chairman Manning, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide Interested Party testimony on SB174 on behalf of the Ohio Child Support Professionals Association. We are a membership organization of county child support enforcement agencies (CSEAs), dedicated to strengthening Ohio's child support program through education, advocacy, and support. My name is Ryann Levering-White, and I serve as the Director of Public Policy.

Ohio's Child Support Program plays a critical role in the lives of children and families. One in four children in our state—nearly 700,000 cases statewide—are served by our County CSEAs. CSEAs are responsible for administering and enforcing child support orders in each of these cases. Importantly, we do not represent either party in a child support case; rather, we serve the best interests of the child by ensuring that support obligations are properly met.

We support the goal of SB174, which updates Ohio's family law statutes to be more child centered. When parents do not reside together, the paramount objective should always be the best interest of the child. We commend the sponsors for recognizing this principle and for working to modernize Ohio's approach to family law.

Throughout the legislative process, we have had productive conversations with the bill's proponents regarding key provisions—particularly those related to paternity establishment and child support. We appreciate their openness to feedback and collaboration. We have also identified areas where additional clarification is needed, and we trust that these matters will be addressed in a future amendment to avoid confusion.

It is essential to note that, once a court establishes a child support order, the CSEA must be able to promptly enter that order into our statewide support enforcement tracking system (SETS). This step is critical to ensure timely case processing and the immediate commencement of collections. To support this, we respectfully emphasize the importance of clear, detailed court orders. Even in cases where parents may share equal or nearly equal parenting time, a child support order may still be proper and warranted (e.g. where the parties have a large disparity in income). All deviations from the standard child support

guidelines should be explicitly stated, and a completed guidelines worksheet must be attached to each order, as required by law. This practice promotes consistency, reduces delays, and supports our shared goal of serving Ohio's children and families efficiently.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony and for your commitment to children and families across Ohio. I am available to answer any questions you may have at [ryann@ohiocspa.org](mailto:ryann@ohiocspa.org).

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