



SENATOR PEGGY LEHNER  
6<sup>th</sup> District

**Sponsor Testimony- SB 251**  
**Senate Health, Human Services, and Medicaid Committee**  
**January 28, 2020**

Chairman Burke, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on SB 251, which require childcare providers to complete an annual infant safe sleep education program established by the Department of Job and Family Services.

This legislation was brought to me by a constituent, Kristin Watkins, who tragically lost her daughter, Addison due to unsafe sleep practices by her daycare provider. Addison's family moved from California, where this incident happened, to Ohio for a fresh start. When Kristin was reading about Ohio's laws, she saw that there was no requirement for an annual safe sleep course for licensed in-home daycares and licensed centers for infants. Kristin came to me with the proposal for Addison's Law, in the hope that other children will be saved by safe sleep courses.

This legislation would require infant child care centers to complete an annual safe sleep education program and to follow safe sleep practices. It also lays out consequences for violations of this law, which include fines, and even suspension of licensure or certification. Also established in this legislation is The Safe Sleep Training Fund, which would consist of penalties assessed under this legislation.

Currently, the law does not require childcare providers to complete safe sleep training. Rather, the Department of Health is only required to provide classes - there is no requirement for childcare providers to complete the training. Childcare providers need to receive this training on safe sleep, which is an easy way to save children's lives. According to the Ohio American Academy of Pediatrics, 3 Ohio infants die each week due to unsafe sleeping practices. About 1 in 5 deaths happen when someone besides a parent is caring for the infant.<sup>1</sup> Educating those caring for infants is an easy way to prevent needless deaths of Ohio's most vulnerable children. Thank you for your time and I would be happy to take any questions from the committee.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://ohioaap.org/SafeSleep>