

Ohio House of Representatives
Finance Subcommittee on Health and Human Services
Jennifer Frey, Every Child Succeeds
Interested Party Testimony
HB 110
March 3, 2021

Chairman Roemer, Ranking Member West and members of the House Finance Subcommittee on Health and Human Services, thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony today regarding House Bill 110 and its investments in Ohio's children and families.

My name is Jennifer Frey and I am the President of Every Child Succeeds, a Help Me Grow home visiting program. Our program, based at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, delivers evidence-based home visiting in Southwest Ohio and Northern Kentucky. In our 22 years of operation, we have served more than 27,000 families in the Greater Cincinnati region with over 630,000 home visits. Our data show strong results and improved outcomes. Among the families we have served: 88% of infants had a healthy birthweight and born full term, more than 90% received well-child visits on schedule, and 98% of children were on track developmentally. For ECS, infant mortality is 4.7 per 1,000 – a rate well below city, county, state, or national averages and equivalent for all races.

My testimony is related to two opportunities within this biennial budget to continue the state's focus on improving the lives of mothers and their children. I want to thank Governor DeWine and this General Assembly for the investments made in the last budget to the Help Me Grow program, Ohio's evidence-based home visitation program within the Ohio Department of Health.

While we at ECS have a strong track record of success for the mothers and children who we are able to serve, we know there are families in our community who could benefit from our services. We know that Ohio needs additional home visiting capacity. The National Home Visiting 2020 Yearbook estimates that in Ohio there were 638,100 pregnant women and families with children under 6 years old not yet in kindergarten who could have benefited from home visiting. These families included 812,600 children. One quarter of these families met two or more risk criteria such as poverty or having a mother who is single, is under age 21, and/or has less than a high school education. Over half had one or more targeting criteria.

Help Me Grow, as the basis for the Ohio home visiting service system, has adopted some unique and strong elements.

- Outreach to families and a central intake approach.
- A shared statewide data collection system that has been improved over time.
- Quality assurance as well as some pay-for-performance measures, including bonus payments for home visiting providers who meet specified benchmark objectives.
- A Home Visiting Advisory Group, a state cabinet-level position to support children's initiatives, and additional public-private sector leadership is committed to improving the health and well-being of Ohio's families during pregnancy, infancy, and early childhood.

I strongly encourage the General Assembly to approve the Governor's proposed funding for Help Me Grow. Studies have shown that investment in evidence-based home visiting leads to significant societal benefits and cost savings in various areas (e.g. Medicaid).

The second opportunity is related to pay for success contracting in the state. We at ECS, along with both in and out of state investors have been exploring a pay for success pilot over the last four years. In a pay for success structure, private investors provide upfront financing for the delivery of services and are repaid by the public only if the services achieve a contractually agreed upon set of positive outcomes. Put simply, if results are not achieved, the taxpayers do not pay. Pay for success combines nonprofit expertise, public/private sector funding, and rigorous measurement and evaluation to transform how government and society respond to social challenges.

The General Assembly established the state's pay for success contracting program four years ago, calling for one or two pilot projects to reduce the incidence of infant mortality, low-birthweight births, premature births, and stillbirths and to promote equity in birth outcomes among infants of different races. That pilot project/project was to be funded from the Infant Vitality appropriation within the Ohio Department of Health.

The legislature subsequently authorized the administration of the state's pay for success program in the Treasurer of State's office in the last budget bill. The ResultsOhio program in Treasurer Robert Sprague's office has established an infrastructure for the state to pursue these pay for success contracts.

As Treasurer Sprague testified before the Higher Education Subcommittee last week, the Treasurer's Office issued an RFP last fall for organizations around the state to propose pay for success projects. I am proud that our proposal was deemed "pay for success appropriate and ready" and received the attached feasibility report from the Treasurer's office. We are now asking the General Assembly appropriate funds to execute the project.

We have presented a proposal to leverage our decades of track record serving high-risk mothers and their babies to make an historic, one-time investment of \$4 million in our work. Branded as ECS+, we look to target the most vulnerable in our community living in poverty to enroll them in our program, using a tiered team approach to address social determinants of health, and testing new strategies to keep families engaged.

ECS+ addresses the state's priorities by providing high-quality, evidence-based home visiting to hard-to-reach pregnant women early in their pregnancy and throughout the first six months of their baby's life. It addresses several of ODH's priority factors, including health behaviors such as smoking, access to care, and connection to mental health treatment as well as several of ODH's priority health outcomes, including depression, pre-term birth, and infant mortality.

We are humbled to have a Cincinnati-based philanthropic investor, Every Child Capital, as well as a national leader in mission-driven private capital outcomes financing prepared to invest the \$4 million to execute a pay for success project.

Every Child Capital includes a wide array of funders and leading philanthropists in Southwest Ohio, including The Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr. Foundation, the Gladys and Ralph Lazarus Fund of The Greater Cincinnati Foundation, United Way of Greater Cincinnati, the Thomas J. Emery Memorial, the Duke Energy Foundation and the Jacob G. Schmidlapp Trusts, Fifth Third Bank. Maycomb Capital's \$50 million Community Outcomes Fund is based out of New York looking to deploy millions of dollars in Ohio.

We are eager to work with the General Assembly, Treasurer's Office, and Ohio Department of Health to fund a pay for success project to improve the health of Ohio's most vulnerable mothers and children. I welcome the opportunity to address any questions you may have.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment: ResultsOhio Feasibility Report