



**Proponent Testimony House Bill 106
Commerce and Labor Committee
Catholic Conference of Ohio
May 16th, 2023**

Chair Johnson, Vice Chair Manchester, Ranking Member McNally, and members of the Commerce and Labor Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony. My name is Will Kuehnle, and I am an associate director with the Catholic Conference of Ohio. The Catholic Conference is the official voice of the Catholic Church in Ohio on matters of public policy, and we are pleased to support House Bill 106, also known as the Pay Stub Protection Act.

The Catholic faith sees work as a fundamental right. Going further, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops wrote in their *Pastoral Letter on the U.S. Economy* that the fundamental right to make a living calls for protection in the form of fundamental fairness in all agreements and transactions. Transparency between businesses and workers demonstrates respect for the dignity that all people possess. Regardless of whether one is a consumer, employee, or employer, all human beings deserve equal knowledge, consent, and freedom in economic transactions, contracts, or promises.

Notably, the first modern pronouncement from a Pope on social issues came just before the turn of the 20th century in the form of a letter on economic justice. When Pope Leo wrote *Rerum Novarum* in 1891, he spoke severely and gravely against the practice – widespread both then and now – of wage theft. Pope Leo wrote that “to defraud any one of wages that are his due is a great crime which cries to the avenging anger of Heaven.” The Pay Stub Protection Act will defend working Ohioans from this crime. This legislation communicates to the people of this state not only that their dignity is not less than their employers’ but also that their government recognizes their right to their earned wages. The Catholic Church shares Representative Jarrells’s and Representative Lipps’s concern for the constituent you heard about in their sponsor testimony who found one day that their pay has reduced considerably but lacks the legal right to a pay stub illuminating their circumstances.

The Catholic Conference is glad to support House Bill 106 and we ask for your swift passage of this legislation, for the sake of economic justice and the dignity of workers in this state. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony, and I am happy to answer any questions.