



Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children

KIMBERLY TICE
Executive Director
ktice@oaeyc.org
Phone: 419-946-6693

P.O. Box 71
Mt. Gilead, Ohio 43338

To: The Honorable Jay Edwards, Chair of the House Finance Committee

From: Kimberly Tice, Executive Director, Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children (Ohio AEYC)

Date: April 19, 2023

Re: H.B. 33 Written Testimony for House Finance Committee

Chair Edwards, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the House Finance Committee, my name is Kimberly Tice, and I am the Executive Director of the Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children. Ohio AEYC is a statewide professional association representing close to 2,000 members while also supporting the entire early childhood profession across Ohio.

I am respectfully submitting written testimony for consideration by the House Finance Committee to urge you to restore the H.B 33 appropriation of \$150 million in FY 2024 in Fund 5CV3 line item 6006A7, ARPA Childcare as originally proposed in H.B. 33, Governor DeWine's Executive Budget proposal for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025.

The language in the Governor's Executive Budget would be used by the Department of Job and Family Services, in consultation with the new Department of Children and Youth, to establish a child care scholarship for child care for individuals working in "critical occupations" – including child care workers who earn between 161-200% of the Federal Poverty Level. Ohio AEYC supports this targeted, one-time investment to support educators, increase access to child care, and address the workforce needs of the state.

We know that child care programs are contending with massive and unprecedented staffing shortages, leading to long waiting lists for families in need of child care.

With the investment in these scholarships, Ohio has a unique opportunity to address not one but three interrelated issues: bolstering child care programs with much-needed resources, supporting early childhood educators who are parents themselves and creating more accessible childcare options so businesses can have greater success on their road to economic recovery.

Benefits to Child Care Programs

- Supports recruitment and retention of educators.
- Increases revenue for programs who previously offered free or discounted tuition for staff.

Benefits for Educator/Parents:

- Allows educators who were paying for child care expenses out of pocket to earn more take-home pay to help afford other family expenses.
- Provides qualified educators the opportunity to accept job promotions without jeopardizing public benefits their family receives.

Benefits for Ohio Business Community:

- Keeps more classrooms and programs open for the new and existing businesses whose workers need child care options.
- Incentivizes child care programs to accept PFCC payments to remain competitive - resulting in increasing child care access for working families.

We also support the other objective of this language proposed in the Executive Budget to increase infant and toddler child care capacity in communities throughout the state. Safe and age-appropriate care for the youngest children requires low staff ratios and small group sizes, which are costly to deliver. Making affordable, high-quality child care for infants and toddlers available to more families would have significant benefits for children, parents, and the economy.

Thank you for supporting Ohio's children, their families, and Ohio's child care workforce. Ohio AEYC is happy to be utilized as a resource and can connect you directly to early childhood educators and families in your districts who stand ready to share first-hand experiences with you related to this testimony.

If you have any questions or concerns or would like to discuss this request, I can be reached at ktice@oaeyc.org or (419) 560-5531.