



**Representative Anita Somani MD**  
11<sup>th</sup> House District

HB 565 Sponsor

Chairman Edwards, Vice Chair LaRe, Acting Ranking Member Troy, and members of the House Finance Committee, thank you so much for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony for House Bill 565. I'd also like to thank my joint sponsor Representative Michele Grim, for working with me to regulate the usage of funds received by crisis pregnancy centers through the Ohio Pregnancy and Parenting Program.

The goal of this bill is to ensure that crisis pregnancy centers are using state funds to provide medical care, proper assistance to expectant and new mothers, and medically accurate information. This bill would ensure that those who receive services from these centers can have access to vital assistance ranging from diapers to food to postpartum and parenting classes, without strings attached.

The need for this bill can clearly be shown through a 2023 study of Franklin County crisis pregnancy centers. According to this study, it was found that these organizations spend a majority of their budget on staff and overhead expenses; with only a small percentage going to providing material assistance to mothers and babies. One central Ohio pregnancy center was found to have spent as little as 3.1% of their budget on participant education and support as opposed to the 67% spent on staff salary and benefits and 15 % on marketing in the fiscal year 2022-2023. In the past, Ohio has given upwards of \$7 million dollars to these centers in our state budgets. This bill would ensure that those state funds are being used for their intended purposes; which are to help mothers and babies in need.

That same study found that many of those who sought services from pregnancy centers were under the impression that they were at a medical facility, which is currently not the case. However, because people do go to these centers to receive medical guidance, it is important that we ensure that they are receiving accurate medical information and health care.

Politics should not influence evidence based practice. HB 565 guarantees that patients at crisis pregnancy centers have access to the medical care and parenting assistance that they are promised by these facilities.