



Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children

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TESTIMONY OF KIMBERLY TICE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
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MAY 16, 2023

Chair Dolan, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Sykes and members of the Senate 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 over 2,000 members while also supporting the entire early childhood profession across Ohio.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today on Substitute House Bill 33 to urge your support for the restoration of the appropriation of \$150 million in FY 2024 in Fund 5CV3 line item 6006A7, ARPA Childcare, as originally proposed in the Governor’s Executive Budget. The amendment that would accomplish the restoration of these funds is entitled “SCO329” and is included with my submitted testimony.

These ARPA funds would be used by the Department of Job and Family Services, in consultation with the new Department of Children and Youth, to establish child care scholarships for critical occupations and other direct service professionals – including child care workers – who earn less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. A portion of the ARPA funds would also be used to increase access to licensed child care programs for infants and toddlers with priority for those in rural and urban areas of Ohio, and to increase administrative efficiency in the childcare program.

Regarding the child care scholarships for critical occupations – 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. These staffing shortages have led to long waiting lists for working families who are in need of child care.

With the investment in these scholarships, Ohio has a unique opportunity to address not one but three interrelated issues: 1) bolstering child care programs with much-needed one-time resources; 2) supporting early childhood educators who are working parents themselves; and 3) creating more accessible childcare options so businesses can achieve the employment levels necessary to support operations.

The critical care scholarships are a tangible benefit that will help to recruit and retain early childhood educators. Educators paying out-of-pocket for child care gain more take-home pay and can accept job promotions without jeopardizing public benefits their family receives.

Programs currently offering discounted child care will save money and can invest it back into their services, ultimately benefiting more working families in need. Offering child care as an employee benefit has become a major competitive factor in attracting and retaining top talent in various industries. The critical care scholarships will incentivize programs to offer publicly funded child care to remain competitive in attracting and retaining qualified job candidates.

Thank you for supporting Ohio's children, working 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.

I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

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.

_____ moved to amend as follows:

1 After line 160341a, insert:

2 "5CV3 6006A7 ARPA Childcare \$150,000,000 \$0"

3 In line 160347, add \$150,000,000 to fiscal year 2024

4 In line 160376, add \$150,000,000 to fiscal year 2024

5 After line 160806, insert:

6 **"Section 307.230.** ARPA CHILDCARE

7 Of the foregoing appropriation item 6006A7, ARPA Childcare,
8 \$150,000,000 in fiscal year 2024 shall be used by the Ohio
9 Department of Job and Family Services, in consultation with the
10 Department of Children and Youth, to do both of the following:

11 (A) Establish a child care scholarship for critical
12 occupations and other direct service professionals as identified
13 in consultation with the Governor's Office of Workforce
14 Transformation. Individuals awarded scholarships shall have
15 incomes that are less than 200 per cent of the federal poverty
16 level; and

17 (B) Increase access to licensed child care programs for
18 infants and toddlers with priority for those in rural and urban
19 areas and to streamline administrative efficiency of the child

20 care program, in accordance with the program guidelines for the
21 use of these funds provided by the U.S. Department of the
22 Treasury."

23 The motion was _____ agreed to.

24 SYNOPSIS

25 **Department of Job and Family Services**

26 **Sections 307.10 and 307.230**

27 Restores an As Introduced appropriation of \$150,000,000 in
28 FY 2024 in Fund 5CV3 ALI 6006A7, ARPA Childcare. Restores As
29 Introduced language requiring the funds to be used by ODJFS, in
30 consultation with DCY, to (1) establish a child care scholarship
31 for critical occupations and other direct service professionals
32 for individuals with incomes that are less than 200% of the
33 federal poverty level and (2) increase access to licensed child
34 care programs for infants and toddlers with priority for those
35 in rural and urban areas and to streamline administrative
36 efficiency of the child care program.