

Johonna Hughes

Family Action Network Parent Advocate

May 14th, 2025

Ohio Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee Chairperson Manchester, Vice Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Weinstein, and Members of the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee:

My name is Johonna Hughes and I am a parent from Franklin County. I am here today to urge you to restore the Governor's budget proposal, which included critical investments for a child tax credit.

Keeping consistent child care has been a struggle because of my own job turnover. Every time I lose a job or have to switch positions, it disrupts the care my children receive. That instability affects them emotionally and developmentally—and it weighs heavily on me as a mom.

My family is struggling financially—it feels like I'm constantly drowning and can't stay afloat. I'm stuck in a cycle of dead-end jobs without benefits, and dealing with government assistance is a constant hassle.

Past decisions I made over five years ago still limit my job opportunities. Even though I have multiple certifications, I'm not able to use them fully. I haven't been able to finish college, and minimum wage just isn't enough to survive while raising four children.

I take full accountability for my past and continue working hard to be a productive member of society. But the ripple effects are real—and my kids feel them too. I just want the opportunity to build stability for my family. Real support would make a huge difference.

Groundwork Ohio has outlined key priorities that will strengthen our state's early childhood system, including:

- **Child Care Crisis:** RESTORE publicly funded child care eligibility to 160% of FPL and RESTORE the Child Care Choice Voucher program to \$75M in FY26 and \$150M in FY27.
- **Economic Stability:** RESTORE the proposed refundable Child Tax Credit of up to \$1,000 per child under age 7.

These investments will not only help children thrive but also boost Ohio's workforce and economy. I urge you to fully fund these initiatives to ensure every child gets the best start in

life. Thank you for your time and commitment to Ohio's children and families. I am happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Johonna Hughes