

Katie Back

Family Action Network Parent Advocate

May 14, 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 Katie Back 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.

As someone who has one toddler and one school-aged child, and my family struggles as we cannot afford child care or healthcare. We work jobs that provide insurance, but rising premiums cover less than half of what we need. Child care for both of my children costs over \$600 a week—more than half of our paychecks—leaving us with very little after bills are paid. This puts us in the impossible position of choosing between paying for child care, covering basic living expenses, or giving our children opportunities. At times, we are forced to prioritize one expense over another, often deciding to let bills go in the hope of negotiating payment plans, or risk not paying at all and facing the possibility of losing everything. Adding to the challenge, we struggle to afford extracurricular activities for my son, something that we want for his growth but simply can't manage financially. The pressure is overwhelming, and it feels as though we are stuck in a never-ending cycle of financial strain, trying to balance it all without enough resources. We need better investments in childcare across the state to make it affordable for all families.

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

- **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,

Katie Back