



OHIO CHAMBER CHAMPIONS

American Electric Power
The Andersons
Anthem
AT&T
Bon Secours Mercy Health
CareWorks
CareWorksComp
Charter Communications

Columbia Gas of Ohio
Commercial Vehicle Group
Encino Energy
FirstEnergy Corp.
General Electric
Grange Insurance Companies
Gulfport Energy Corporation

Kroger
Marathon Petroleum Company
Nationwide
Northeast Ohio Medical University
Penn National Gaming, Inc.
Petland, Inc.
Plante Moran PLLC

Procter & Gamble Co.
Quicken Loans, Inc.
Squire Patton Boggs LLP
U.S. Bank
UnitedHealthcare
Vistra Energy
Zaino Hall & Farrin

June 10, 2020

The Honorable Mike DeWine
Governor of the State of Ohio
Ohio Statehouse
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Governor DeWine:

I want to personally thank you for your leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the decisions you have made, the majority of Ohioans have escaped the wrath of this disease. However, as our state begins to open for business, there is one missing link to a vibrant, fully staffed economy and that is the full capacity of class size in our daycare centers.

As a father, grandfather and leader of Ohio's largest and most diverse business organization, I know the value of quality childcare centers. I also know that many of Ohio's employees rely on safe and affordable childcare. However, under the current restrictions employees are having a hard time finding childcare due to lack of space and our childcare operators are having a hard time finding qualified workers to meet the increased demands.

Prior to the COVID-19 business closers and restrictions, 285,000 children of our state relied on daycare centers. Today, with the COVID-19 restrictions only 173,000 spots are open for these children of working parents. So instead of being in a familiar, caring and nurturing daycare center, parents are having to make the difficult decision of placing their children with unlicensed caregivers who may not know CPR, don't follow nutritional standards and have not gone through background checks in order to return to their jobs. Or, for some, the parent simply cannot return to the workforce due to the lack of accessible childcare.

Under normal circumstances, Ohio's daycare centers are highly regulated and operate with a narrow profit margin. Adding additional regulations and limitations to the number of children they can serve is not sustainable and will create even more stress on this business sector. Short-term funding from the CARES Act grants did NOT cover these business' financial losses to date and will run out in 60 days exacerbating the problem and possibly forcing these vital centers to close.

I urge you to reconsider the current class size restrictions which are the strictest in the country. The childcare industry is used to implementing stringent hygiene practices while ensuring the safety of their students and employees and will continue to do so as we fight this coronavirus. As Ohio employees return to work, they desperately need their centers to be open at full capacity. Ohio's economy will not be able to fully recover without our indispensable childcare centers operating at full strength.

Sincerely,

Andrew E. Doehrel
President & CEO