



**OHIO CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE**

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U.S. Chamber Foundation Unveils New Economic Report at 2025 Ohio Chamber Childcare Policy Summit

COLUMBUS, OHIO – At its 2025 Ohio Childcare Policy Summit today, the Ohio Chamber unveiled the “Untapped Potential: Ohio” economic report, a study that assesses the direct financial impact of insufficient childcare coverage on the state’s economy, in partnership with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation and Groundwork Ohio.

The study found that childcare is a severe economic barrier in Ohio. The state’s childcare gap drives parents out of the workforce, reduces tax revenue for the state and puts undue strain on households. An estimate of the direct financial impact of insufficient childcare coverage revealed \$5.48 billion in lost economic activity for the state each year.

“Access to quality, affordable childcare is both a short-term, urgent priority and a long-term goal,” said Aaron Merchen, Executive Director of Early Childhood Education Policy and Programs at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation. “These reports outline a challenge for states but also an opportunity.”

Ohio is the fourteenth state for which the U.S. Chamber Foundation has released an “Untapped Potential” study. The findings are based on results from a statewide survey of households with children under 6 who are not yet in kindergarten.

Ohio ranks 30th in labor participation relative to other states, and the study’s findings indicate that many parents have been forced to or may soon be forced to stop working without adequate childcare options. In fact, 70% of parents of young children in Ohio missed work or class in the past three months for childcare-related reasons, and 33% of parents that experienced disruptions to their employment in the past year reported leaving the workforce as a direct result of issues with childcare.

“Ohio is growing every day,” said Ohio Chamber President & CEO Steve Stivers. “We keep bringing in new projects and job opportunities, but we’re not keeping up on creating new childcare options for the people we’re attracting — or even the families we already have here. We’re leaving a lot on the table if we don’t properly address that challenge.”

The price of childcare is also a significant obstacle for many Ohioans. On average, Ohio families spend \$572 per month on childcare, and 58% of surveyed parents stated that they selected their current childcare arrangement primarily for financial reasons. However, 96% of parents believe that health and safety is the most important factor when choosing childcare.

The study concludes that access to childcare has a sizable impact on parents' career development and potential and urges legislators and business leaders to thoughtfully consider measures that can alleviate existing childcare issues. It also poses a final question: "What could Ohio's parents and leaders do with an additional \$5.48 billion each year?"

The full study is attached.

The Ohio Chamber is the state's leading business advocate and represents thousands of companies that do business in Ohio. Our mission is to aggressively champion free enterprise, economic competitiveness and growth for the benefit of all Ohioans.

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