



Shancie Jenkins, Chief
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Sunset Review Committee
Help Me Grow Advisory Council

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Chairman Jordan and members of the Sunset Review Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the Help Me Grow Advisory Council. My name is Shancie Jenkins, and I am Chief of the Office of Health Improvement and Wellness at the Ohio Department of Health.

The Help Me Grow Advisory Council is required for all states that accept federal IDEA funds which are used to create a statewide system of coordinated services for parents of young children with developmental delays and disabilities. An integral part of Ohio's prenatal to age three system of supports, the services offered by Help Me Grow Early Intervention equip parents with the means to help their child acquire the early building blocks necessary for long term success. The council is mandated by federal regulations to include members from various state agencies, parents of children with disabilities, and providers of early intervention services. The council must advise state early intervention program leadership on the identification of sources of fiscal and other support for services of early intervention, promotion of methods of intra and inter-agency collaboration around the early intervention program, preparation of the early intervention application and annual report, and the transition of children with disabilities from preschool and other appropriate services. The council meets once a quarter in person and once a quarter via conference call for a total of eight meetings a year.

The Early Intervention Program is now co-located with the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), with a proposed transition of lead agency status to DODD. Should that transition occur after receiving legislative approval, the Help Me Grow Advisory council responsibilities would transfer to DODD and be renamed as the Early Intervention Advisory Council.

Due to proposed changes to the program and the active work of the council, ODH recommends that the Sunset Review Committee reauthorize this council.

Thank you for your consideration and I am available to answer any questions you may have at this time.