



SENATOR SHERROD BROWN

Ohio voters emphasize the need to elect leaders like **Sherrod Brown** who fight for family-friendly economic policies



Ohio Voters Emphasize the Need to Prioritize Care and Elect Leaders Like Sherrod Brown

Campaign for a Family Friendly Economy (CFFE) PAC is the largest canvassing operation in Ohio this year. Our canvassing teams have reached out to over 600,000 Ohioans since the end of August.

We've spoken with thousands of Ohioans, and many have shared concerns about the increased cost of living. But "cost of living" doesn't just mean groceries.

Voters tell us they're struggling to pay for child care and care for aging loved ones. **When they can't find child or senior care, they miss work. The same is true for families who don't have access to paid family and medical leave.**

These stories track with recent data as well. According to The Century Foundation, **the cost of child care in Ohio has increased 25% since 2019.** The average cost for one infant in a child care center is over \$12,000 per year.

The stories below highlight four Ohioans who have personal experience with these pressing issues.

All four storytellers are voting for Senator Sherrod Brown, who continues to fight for affordable, accessible child care and senior care.

They know the best path forward for hardworking Ohioans is electing leaders who understand that a strong national economy requires a strong care economy.



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Billie Mays



In May of 2022, Billie lost her job of 20 years. At that time, she was already a part-time caregiver for her parents, but her mom was still able to care for her dad.

Before Billie could start looking for new employment, her mom got COVID, which permanently impacted her mental state. It quickly became clear that Billie would have to choose between staying home to care for her parents full-time or placing them in a nursing facility.

Like most Americans, Billie's parents were not wealthy. Billie's mom worked as a cafe worker and housekeeper for the same hospital for 50 years. Billie's dad ran his own business for 40 years, but neither parent ended up with much in savings or insurance.

Billie learned she would likely be forced to send her parents to two different Medicaid facilities, with no guarantee that they would receive quality care. And it would still cost \$15,000 - \$20,000 per month.

She decided to stay home and care for her parents instead. "I had no healthcare or caregiving experience, and had an absolute phobia of bodily fluids," Billie recalls. "It was the longest, hardest two years of my life."

Billie's dad passed away in July 2024, but she is still caring for her mom. She is frustrated that current systems are not set up to help our elderly live their final years with dignity.

Billie is supporting leaders like Sherrod Brown who stand up for working Ohioans and fight to address these issues.



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Billie



St. Bernard, OH



CFFE PAC



Michaela Buriss



“The moment my daughter was born, I knew how hard it would be to go back to work,” Michaela remembers.

Michaela’s job provided four weeks of paid family leave, plus two weeks of personal leave. Michaela also requested six weeks of FMLA.

“I was so lucky to have 12 weeks of leave, some of which was paid. I also got to bring my baby to a daycare at my work. My experience was one of the best in the state, and it was still indescribably difficult to leave my child that early,” Michaela says. She also notes that 12 weeks is barely enough time to physically recover from the bodily trauma of giving birth.

Today, Michaela and her husband are ready for another child. Child care costs are the only thing stopping them. “Daycare costs \$1,700 per month for one child. That’s \$20,000 per year. That’s a massive percentage of my income,” Michaela says.

She has considered looking for another job, but that has downsides as well. Many employers require people to work for months or years before qualifying for leave.

Michaela was shocked by JD Vance’s suggestion that “maybe grandma...wants to help out” with child care. “My mom is still working. My husband’s mom is still working. They can’t afford to retire,” Michaela says. “I’m ready for another child, but we would go bankrupt trying to keep two kids in daycare right now.”

Michaela is voting for Sherrod Brown “because he cares about issues like paid leave and child care that actually impact families.”

“

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Michaela



Columbus, OH



CFFE PAC



Tami Lunan



Tami's story is also the story of her mother and grandmother, who both immigrated to the U.S. in the 1980s. Tami's mom and grandma had been educators in Jamaica, but their qualifications didn't transfer when they immigrated. Instead, Tami's mom worked as a home health aid and medical assistant – but lack of child care options kept her from working as much as she wanted. Parents are still dealing with these same issues today.

Tami's grandma began studying to become a teacher in her new country while also working in a family child care center. She was able to negotiate to bring young Tami with her. "That's the only way my mom was able to work," Tami says.

After Tami aged out of the child care center where her grandma worked, she attended preschool in her grandma's church. "My grandma's connections were the only way I was able to receive child care, and the only way my mom could enter the workforce," Tami tells us. Still today, most child care providers aren't allowed free child care at their own jobs.

Tami feels strongly that Americans shouldn't have to know someone who knows someone in order to access the child care system. She now runs [The CEO Project](#), which organizes parents, child care providers, and teachers to take action on issues that impact Ohio's care economy.

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Tami



Cincinnati, OH



CFFE PAC



Lesley Krimpenfort



Lesley in Mason, Ohio, has personal experience with the lack of elder care options. Lesley's mom was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in her late sixties. Lesley's dad cared for his wife as long as he could, but she eventually ended up in a nursing home. Her condition worsened quickly. "Had she lived longer, I fear my father would have gone broke paying for her care," Lesley says. Lesley's mom lived in the nursing home for less than a year. She passed away at age 72.

Lesley's father then developed dementia. Over time, he shifted from living on his own to needing full time care. He lived for three years in a decent memory care unit, but was then forced to move to a facility that accepts Medicaid.

Lesley has many frustrations with Medicaid approved care facilities. The available ones tend to be understaffed with high turnover rates. They also offer fewer patient engagement activities than private facilities.

The small amount of money Lesley's dad receives each month doesn't make a dent in the cost of his care. He currently owes his facility over \$20,000. He has little money and no assets, and is still waiting for his Medicaid application to be approved. Lesley cannot afford to help

"My dad deserves so much better, Lesley says. "I feel an immense amount of stress and guilt over this every minute of every day."

Lesley is voting for leaders like Sherrod Brown who will continue to prioritize care for aging Americans.



My dad started working in his early teens and didn't stop until he was well into his seventies. For what? He deserves to live in a home where he is engaged, cared for, and valued. Instead, he's a number. He receives substandard care that costs more than any average Ohioan can afford."

Lesley



Mason, OH



CFFE PAC





About CFFE PAC

The Campaign for a Family Friendly Economy PAC (CFFE PAC) is fighting for a future where all people can afford to care for themselves and their loved ones. In 2022, CFFE PAC ran a \$13.5 million program communicating with voters about where candidates stand on policies that lower the cost of prescription drugs, ensure paid family and medical leave, and provide affordable elder and child care. In 2020, CFFE PAC spent almost \$18 million on a program in support of Joe Biden and U.S. Senate candidates that spanned Wisconsin, Michigan, Maine, Iowa, Montana, Virginia, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Florida and Georgia.

Learn more about our work at familyfriendlyeconomy.org.



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