



**Eastern Ohio Correctional Center
Wintersville, OH**

Belmont, Carroll, Columbiana,
Guernsey, Harrison, Jefferson,
Monroe, Noble

**Franklin County CBCF
Columbus, OH**

Franklin

**Lucas County Correctional
Treatment Facility
Toledo, OH**

Lucas

**MonDay Community Correctional
Institution
Dayton, OH**

Darke, Green, Miami,
Montgomery, Preble, Fayette

**NorthEast Ohio Community
Alternative Program
Warren, OH**

Ashtabula, Geauga, Lake, Portage,
Trumbull

**NorthWest Community
Corrections Center
Bowling Green, OH**

Defiance, Fulton, Henry, Williams,
Wood

**River City Correctional Center
Cincinnati, OH**

Hamilton

**STAR Community Justice Center
Franklin Furnace, OH**

Adams, Athens, Brown, Clinton,
Fairfield, Gallia, Highland, Hocking,
Jackson, Lawrence, Meigs,
Morgan, Pickaway, Perry, Pike,
Ross, Scioto, Vinton, Washington

**Stark Regional Correction Center
Louisville, OH**

Holmes, Stark, Tuscarawas, Wayne

**W.O.R.T.H. Center
Lima, OH**

Allen, Auglaize, Hancock, Hardin,
Mercer, Putnam, Paulding, Shelby,
Van Wert

**West Central Community
Correctional Facility
Marysville, OH**

Champaign, Clark, Delaware,
Logan, Madison, Marion, Morrow,
Union

House Finance Committee

House Bill 96

Ohio Operating Budget

Fiscal Years 2026-2027

Testimony of: Matt McClellan

Executive Director

STAR Community Justice Center

Committed to Community Corrections Excellence

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Chair Stewart, Vice Chair Dovilla, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the Finance Committee. My name is Matt McClellan, I am the Executive Director of STAR Community Justice Center in Scioto County, and a Trustee of CorJus, Inc. CorJus is a professional association that represents eleven publicly operated Community Based Correctional Facilities (CBCFs) in Ohio. I greatly appreciate this opportunity to provide this testimony on House Bill 96, the state operating budget for FY26/27.

CBCFs have existed in Ohio since 1978, when the first one was created by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections. CBCFs have since grown to serve all eighty-eight counties in Ohio providing residential treatment to over 7,500 offenders annually, with several thousand more in a variety of outpatient programs. CBCFs were originally an alternative sentencing option. However, as the needs of the communities have increased in dealing with offender populations, CBCFs have evolved into robust treatment facilities, providing the high dosage levels of treatment and services to help offenders address their increased criminogenic needs. CBCFs take a holistic approach to help offenders address not only their behavioral needs like substance abuse, medically assisted treatment (MAT), cognitive restructuring, anger management, trauma, and mental health, but also additional social and educational needs like family reunification, educational attainment, vocational training, and employment skills, among many others.

CBCFs are effective at working with high risk, felony level offenders, by addressing the multifaceted needs that lead to them recidivating. Over the years, the typical offenders that are served are no longer low risk but now have greater instances of violent tendencies or are dual diagnosed with mental health needs that require more care. Due to these needs and the risks involved, it is crucial that CBCFs retain the highly trained and specialized staff that it takes to deal with these types of populations. It affects the community and outcomes of programs when CBCFs lose staff to higher paying jobs that work with lower risk individuals in that same community. The importance of CBCFs keeping qualified staff cannot be overstated.

After considerable collaboration with other CBCFs outside of CorJus and with ODRC, we are grateful for the increases to the 501501 line included in the as-introduced version of the governor's budget. The increases of 4.4% in 2026, totaling \$4,358,400, and an additional 4% in 2027, totaling \$4,146,200, will help CBCFs continue to address needs in staff retention and combat the rising costs of goods and services. As I previously stated, staffing retention issues are of paramount importance. Turnover at institutions such as ours must be curbed and we

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believe that these increases will continue to help. We request that the House maintain the 501501 line item at the as-introduced funding level. Any reductions in the proposed funding could have adverse impacts on safety levels within programs, operational capacities of facilities, and/or outcomes of participants.

In the last budget, CBCFs were included in the Behavioral Health Drug Reimbursement Program located in line-item MHA 336442 within the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services' budget. Also in the last budget, the House made an increased investment into this program, for which we greatly appreciate this body for its recognition of the need in this area. This program has granted offenders access to expanded services targeting their addiction and withdrawal, as well as psychotropic medications to address the increasing mental health needs. Our members have discussed the program with OHMAS and based on submittals for reimbursement, the demand for the program is only getting higher, however, reimbursement rates continue to decrease due to rising demand.

In order to cover the current needs of the program and to allow for CBCF's and jails to introduce or expand these evident-based practices for their populations, we are advocating for an increase to this line item from \$5,250,000 to \$10,000,000 for each fiscal year. This increase would help programs address the needs, cover the gap that has been experienced, and ease the burden that has been incurred by all parties. Should the program not be increased, the effects would be seen through a decrease in the efficacy of the treatment for these offenders and, in some cases, offenders being denied from CBCFs. We hope that everyone sees the need and opportunity to help more people through the increase that we are requesting.

As I close this testimony, I would like to thank all those other entities that have worked collaboratively with CorJus in continuing to improve the continuum that Ohio has for serving offenders. Thank you to both the Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections and the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services for continuing to invest and prioritize community corrections. Thank you also to our community corrections partners, the Ohio Community Corrections Association, and the Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections. It is through our combined efforts that we will continue to make the greatest impact we can for our communities.

Chair Stewart and members of the committee, I appreciate you allowing me the opportunity to provide this testimony and please feel free to contact me with any questions.

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