



**Ohio House of Representatives | Committee on Ways & Means
Testimony in Support: HB 177 Carol Folkerth
Columbus, OH | October 10, 2017**

Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chair Scherer, Ranking Member Rogers and Members of the Committee:

Good morning.

My name is Carol Folkerth, and I am the Executive Director of the Jewish Community Center of Greater Columbus. As a member of the National Board of Jewish Community Centers and with my almost 35 years of JCC experience, I am here in that capacity, as well as on behalf of our sister JCC's across the state, to support HB 177.

Because Jewish Community Centers are not a fitness club, but a community center, and we'd ask to be treated as such.

Who we are; what we do

For over 100 years here in Columbus, our JCC has provided the Jewish community and the general community, with critical services to the elderly, young children, families and individuals. JCCs are open seven days a week, often from 5:30 AM to 10 PM, to meet the community's needs.

Yes, as part of our services we do have some fitness equipment and programming because taking care of your body is a core Jewish value. But the primary mission at the JCC is taking care of our youngest and most vulnerable in the early childhood center, summer camps and after school care for children and youth and caring for our frail elderly senior population.

To remain financially viable, the JCC has to cover our costs, but the focus is on our mission work and community service.

This year the JCC will provide over a quarter of a million dollars (\$250,000) in financial assistance for early childhood, after school care, and summer programs.

At the other end of life's spectrum, we serving nearly two thousand (2,000) seniors, and provide – in collaboration with Lifecare Alliance – 13,000 kosher meals to the frail elderly. We are the only site in all of Franklin County, and the region, to provide these hot kosher meals which for 80% of our clients is the only hot meal they have that day.

For over 50 years the JCC has been serving families with a child with special needs: 50 campers, 4-21 years of age, with special challenges from Autism to Cerebral Palsy to difficult behavioral situations, find the JCC home for the summer for day camp.

**There's something
about this place.**

www.columbusjcc.org

JCC Main Campus
1125 College Ave.
Columbus, OH 43209
614.231.2731

JCC New Albany
150 E. Dublin-Granville Rd.
New Albany, OH 43054
614.855.4885

JCC North
6121 Olentangy River Rd.
Worthington, OH 43085
614.764.2414

Jennifer Cammeyer
Board President
Carol Folkerth
Executive Director

It might seem obvious to me, but I'd like to point out that although it is called the Jewish Community Center, more than forty percent (40%) of our membership is not Jewish.

What's true for us is by and large, true for our fellow JCC's across Ohio.

Columbus JCC is Part of a Network

For example, the Mandel Jewish Community Center in Cleveland provides well over \$400,000 per year in scholarship assistance spanning its camps, early childhood, and general membership programs.

They also run a program for visually impaired seniors and in partnership with ten local school districts, provide on-site job training programs for young adults with developmental disabilities.

And, despite being in the heart of Ohio's largest Jewish community, they too serve the wider community: over one-third of their membership is not Jewish.

This is all a way of saying that we are so much more than a gym.

We are a community center, and are focused on serving the community.

The JCC unites the community, and as a nonprofit, takes any revenue we make and reinvests it directly back into providing for our mission work and for services for all.

Conclusion:

The ability to lower our membership price would make our programs more accessible to even more people.

The JCC Board of Trustees and membership of 7500 individuals urges you to reverse this tax policy and join 45 other states that do not tax nonprofit centers providing this important array of services to so many.

Thank you. I'm happy to answer any questions.



**Ohio House of Representatives | Committee on Ways & Means
Testimony in Support: HB 177 Mike Klapper
Columbus, OH | October 10, 2017**

Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chair Scherer, Ranking Member Rogers and Members of the Committee:

My name is Mike Klapper, and I am the Assistant Executive Director of the Jewish Community Center of Greater Columbus and a Westerville Ohio resident. I write on behalf of the Jewish Community Center of New Albany in support of HB 177.

Because Jewish Community Centers are not a fitness club, but a community center, and we should be treated as such. The JCC in New Albany does not have any fitness equipment. This is a school for young children, where over 150 families and children attend for childcare and summer camp.

Who we are; what we do

The Jewish Community Center of New Albany began in 1997 to provide Early Childhood services and care for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years of age in the North East part of Columbus. That mission has not changed. Over 150 children receive care from 7 am to 6 pm, Monday through Friday. Many of these families have two working parents and need the services the JCC New Albany provides.

This year the JCC will provide over a quarter of a million dollars (\$250,000) in financial assistance for early childhood, after school care, and summer programs.

For over 50 years the JCC has been serving families with a child with special needs. 50 campers, 4-21 years of age, with special challenges from Autism to Cerebral Palsy to difficult behavioral situations, find the JCC home for the summer for day camp, including children from JCC New Albany.

Please understand that although it is called the Jewish Community Center New Albany more than forty five percent (45%) of our membership is not Jewish.

Our JCC New Albany parents should not be charged tax as we have no gym and our focus is on community service.

The JCC unites the New Albany community, and as a nonprofit, takes any revenue we make and reinvests it directly back into providing for our mission work and for services for all.

**There's something
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Jennifer Cammeyer
Board President
Carol Folkerth
Executive Director

Conclusion:

The ability to lower our membership price would make our programs more accessible to working parents.

Therefore on behalf of our families, I urge you to reverse this tax policy and join 45 other states that do not tax nonprofit centers providing these important services.



**Ohio House of Representatives | Committee on Ways & Means
Testimony in Support: HB 177 Nikki Henry
Columbus, OH | October 10, 2017**

Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chair Scherer, Ranking Member Rogers and Members of the Committee:

My name is Nikki Henry and I am the Director of the Jewish Community Center Early Childhood North West and a Westerville, Ohio resident. I write on behalf of the Jewish Community Center of North West in support of HB 177.

Because Jewish Community Centers are not a fitness club, but a community center, and we should be treated as such. The JCC North West does not have any fitness equipment. We are located in and share space with a synagogue, a house of worship. This is a school for young children, where over 65 families and children attend for childcare and summer camp.

Who we are; what we do

The Jewish Community Center North West was established in 1987 to provide Early Childhood services and care for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years of age in the North West part of Columbus. That mission has not changed. Over 65 children receive care from 7 am to 6 pm, Monday through Friday. Many of these families have two working parents and need the services the JCC New West provides.

This year the JCC will provide over a quarter of a million dollars (\$250,000) in financial assistance for early childhood, after school care, and summer programs.

For over 50 years the JCC has been serving families with a child with special needs. 50 campers, 4-21 years of age, with special challenges from Autism to Cerebral Palsy to difficult behavioral situations, find the JCC home for the summer for day camp, including children from JCC North West.

Please understand that although it is called the Jewish Community Center North West more than thirty percent (30%) of our membership is not Jewish.

Our JCC North West parents should not be charged tax as we have no gym and our focus is on community service.

The JCC unites the North West Jewish community, and as a nonprofit, takes any revenue we make and reinvests it directly back into providing for our mission work and for services for all.

Conclusion:

The ability to lower our membership price would make our programs more accessible to working parents.

Therefore, on behalf of our families, I urge you to reverse this tax policy and join 45 other states that do not tax nonprofit centers providing these important services.