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**House Bill 750 Testimony of Susan Wallace
President and CEO, LeadingAge Ohio
House Health Committee
May 20, 2026**

Chair Schmidt, Vice Chair Deeter, Ranking Member Somani, and members of the House Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony on House Bill 750. My name is Susan Wallace, and I serve as President and CEO of LeadingAge Ohio.

LeadingAge Ohio also manages the PACE Association of Ohio, and jointly, members of these two associations have been the drivers for advancing this important care model in the state of Ohio. We are pleased to support House Bill 750.

The Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly, or PACE, is one of the most effective models available for supporting older Ohioans with complex care needs while helping them remain in their homes and communities. PACE provides comprehensive medical and social services through an interdisciplinary care team and serves individuals who qualify for nursing home level of care.

The results are clear: PACE participants report high satisfaction, improved care coordination, and lower rates of institutionalization. At the same time, the model delivers measurable savings to Medicaid through a fully capitated payment structure that provides cost predictability for the state at a level that is by design lower than what Ohio pays for individuals in other managed care programs.

Despite those outcomes, access to PACE remains limited in Ohio. Today, programs operate in only eight counties, with two more counties on the way. This leaves many older Ohioans – particularly those in suburban and rural areas-- without access to a model specifically designed to help people age in place safely and successfully.

House Bill 750 takes a thoughtful approach to expanding access. The legislation creates a structured process for the Ohio Department of Aging to solicit and review proposals for new PACE programs in unserved counties while maintaining appropriate oversight and program standards. Just as importantly, the bill recognizes that expansion must occur in a sustainable and predictable manner for providers willing to invest in new communities.

For Ohio's aging population, expanding PACE means more options for community-based care, stronger support for family caregivers, and fewer unnecessary transitions into institutional settings. For the state, it means continued Medicaid savings and reduced strain on an already challenged long-term care workforce and delivery system.

LeadingAge Ohio and the PACE Association of Ohio respectfully urge the committee to favorably report House Bill 750. Thank you for your consideration.