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**Written Testimony regarding the CMH program in HB49 as Introduced**  
**March 23, 2017**

The Governor's budget includes a proposal to significantly change the Ohio Department of Health's Children with Medical Handicaps (CMH) program by reducing the income eligibility and available services. This program has a long successful history of being a safety-net for families with children who have serious medical conditions. **I ask that you reject the proposed changes to the CMH program and protect these vital services for Ohio's most vulnerable children.**

The CMH program helps families access medical needs that aren't covered by insurance (both private and public) and provides much needed support through specialized service coordination to chronically ill children and families. The program serves 40,000 Ohio children, including patients at the Northwest Ohio Hemophilia Treatment Center at Toledo Children's Hospital.

I have been a Social Worker at the Hemophilia Center for over 30 years and have witnessed first-hand how critical the CMH program is for our families. Many of our families have private insurance and rely on CMH as their secondary coverage. Often, they are barely over income for Ohio Medicaid and will be responsible for secondary coverage if CMH dissolves. Most of these families are barely surviving economically now and have the added concern of losing this coverage. This stress is compounded by their children's significant medical complications.

Another program that is vital to preserve is the HIPP (Hemophilia Insurance Premium Program). This program, funded on a line item under CMH had annual budget of only \$100,000 and allows for payment of insurance premiums for financially eligible patients. At the Northwest Ohio Hemophilia Center in Toledo, we currently have 6 individuals on this program. Their premiums cost the CMH program less than \$19,600/year. However, their premiums purchase millions of dollars worth of medical. An incredible return on the dollar. I know for a fact that 2 of these individuals would let their premiums lapse if the HIPP program didn't assist them. The other 4 families would face extreme financial hardship. Other Hemophilia Treatment Centers around the state can attest to the value of this program with similar figures for their patients. Please don't cut funding for this program!

Our hemophilia patients' care, like others served by CMH, is complicated, specialized, and expensive. CMH has been a safety net for many of our middle income families who won't qualify for Medicaid. CMH is not broken; it is a payer of last resort. It helps Ohio families who have chronically ill children receive comprehensive support in navigating insurance markets and coverage plans. It assists families with huge financial burdens from increasing out-of-pocket costs, limited provider networks and fewer services that are available in private insurance market. Please ensure that the program stays intact and continues to support our most vulnerable children who are from low and middle income families.