

Testimony of Cristin Ramsey, WRITTEN ONLY
Mother of Andrea Ramsey with cystic fibrosis
HB49 as Introduced by the Governor
House Finance - Health and Human Services Subcommittee
March 23, 2017

Chairman Romanchuk, members of the HHS Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the CMH - Children with Medical Handicaps, also known as the "BCM" program.

Insert your introduction here: My name is Cristin Ramsey from Lima, Ohio. My husband, Steve, and I have a 12 year-old daughter, Andrea, with cystic fibrosis. She was diagnosed at 20 months old. We have been on the CMH program for over 10 years now, and immensely grateful for it.

I am writing today to put a face to the 40,000 children served by the CMH Program in the Department of Health and ask that you Save the CMH Program by protecting it from proposed changes in the Governor's budget. Please allow the program to continue to provide an important safety-net for chronically ill children like my daughter. The proposed changes dramatically reduce services and eligibility for this critical program.

Although the proposed language seems to "grandfather" our family into the CMH Health program, I'm concerned about future generations and my future eligibility when my income changes. My family is a cost-share family and the proposed change to move the program into Medicaid will mean that we may no longer meet the financial eligibility guidelines. This program allowed me to work part time so that I can have the flexibility to care for Andrea, take her to her appointments which occur every 4 to 8 weeks on average, and to be there for her with surgeries and hospitalizations with less fear of losing a job and that needed income. I don't WANT to be reliant on government assistance for everything from food to housing to medical care if I am able to work and help provide for my family and be a contributing taxpayer. I am afraid that is what will happen if we lose CMH eligibility due to income changes, which is very possible with my line of work. I see that happening with many families just so they can meet the Medicaid guidelines, which will lower taxes coming in, and will further stress the State. I don't want to have to choose between utilities or food and my daughter's health.

The CMH Program has had great success providing assistance through the medical home model for almost 100 years and keeping families like ours privately insured, contributing to the Ohio economy, paying taxes and owning homes; I am concerned that the CMH children will fall through the cracks if the program is moved to the Department of Medicaid from the Department of Health.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, thank you for protecting Ohio's children by allowing the CMH program to continue providing services to middle- and low-income families. Thank you for the opportunity to share my family's story and I would be happy to answer any questions.

Cristin Ramsey, parent of a CF child with CMH services

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Andrea Ramsey, one of the faces of CMH