



For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

TESTIMONY
November 29, 2017
H.B. 115

Chairman Coley, Vice Chair Ueker, Ranking Minority Member Schiavoni and members of the Government Oversight and Reform Committee, my name is Gary Tonks. I am the CEO of The Arc of Ohio. The Arc is Ohio's oldest and largest advocacy organization representing our state's children and adults with developmental disabilities.

We solidly support H.B. 115 which will provide a means by which law enforcement and others will know in advance if a vehicle is transporting an individual with communication challenges. A major positive component of this legislation is that this is a voluntary registry by the individual, parents of a minor child or guardian. The bill does not mandate identification but provides a practical common sense approach to protect Ohioans with disabilities.

This is the shortest proponent testimony I have given in my thirty plus years of advocacy. As we have discussed this bill among families, it has received overwhelming support. The primary comment has been, "Why haven't we done this sooner!"

I will be happy to answer any questions.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gary Tonks'.

Gary Tonks, CEO
The Arc of Ohio