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"We Stand on Service"

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April 11, 2019

Testimony on HB 166
House Finance Health and Human Services Sub-Committee

Dear Chairman Romanchuck, Ranking Member West, and esteemed committee members,

I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on HB 166. My name is Tonya Reed and I am the Executive Director of RTC. I have been in the field for 24 years. RTC is headquartered in Logan County and provides services in Logan and surrounding counties. We are a not for profit business that provides supports for over 300 individuals with disabilities annually through day programs, employment services, and transportation.

I am very supportive of the budget initiatives outlined by Governor DeWine, Director Davis for the Department of Developmental Disabilities, and Director Miller for Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities. With these budget initiatives and the leadership of Director Davis and Director Miller, I am hopeful we will be able to continue providing quality services to individuals with disabilities to assist them in employment, community connections and independence in life.

I am submitting this testimony for these reasons.

First, I want to share the need for updated rates for day services for individuals with developmental disabilities. RTC is assisting individuals with disabilities access our community on a daily basis. For example, individuals are volunteering for Meals on Wheels, at local libraries, and at animal shelters.

Trevor spent a year volunteering at a school library. One staff member went with Trevor during this volunteer time to help him gain new skills and learn to handle the unexpected challenges that happen in daily life. Trevor made tremendous progress during this time and now has a paid position at a local optometrist office performing data entry.

Opportunities to truly engage in our local community are so valuable in helping individuals advance along their path to employment. The problem is that RTC is losing money by providing this service in the community. Currently, we are paid by antiquated rate models that do not support individualized services or reflect the community-based services we are mandated to provide.

Second, I want to show my support for the funding that is included for transportation in the budget submitted by Director Davis. In 2018, RTC provided 32,416 trips for individuals with disabilities in Logan County. Transportation in a rural county like Logan is critical for individuals with disabilities to be able to work in our local community and to attend programs to enhance their skills. These opportunities would not be available without transportation services.

Mission Statement: Providing services to promote employment, community connections, and independence in life.

RTC does not discriminate in provision of services or employment due to disability, race, color, creed, national origin, gender, or age.

RTC Industries is a tax exempt 501c3 organization

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Finally, I want to show my support for Director Miller's budget initiatives. In 2018, RTC assisted 83 individuals with disabilities obtain and maintain new jobs in our community. Increased funding for OOD services will help us support individuals with more significant challenges in community jobs. It is also important that we braid funding from OOD and DODD in order to provide long-term supports for individuals to help ensure their success.

Brooke is a shining example of success from utilizing all of the services listed above. Brooke began services with RTC in a day program learning job and communication skills. Eventually, Brooke progressed to seeking community employment through OOD. Services through OOD made it possible for Brooke to find a stock clerk position in a local grocery store. The grocery store is 20 minutes from her home, so Brooke relies on RTC transportation services to get her to and from her job. Brooke receives long-term supports on her job through DODD. These supports have allowed Brooke to maintain success in her job and continue to learn new duties. After 5 years on the job, Brooke has advanced to a cashier position providing excellent service to her customers.

Thank you again for the opportunity and privilege to share my thoughts with you. If I can ever be of any help in this process please let me know.

Respectfully,

Tonya Reed
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