



**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 Danielle Horne and I am the Program Director of Dreamshine at Autumn Lakes and we are located in Sunbury Ohio and are currently serving 5 different surrounding counties. We are a Day Program that provides supports for 43 different individuals with many different special interests and abilities. We pride ourselves in making and providing many different unique experiences and opportunities for all our individuals.

**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 that with budget increase we can not only improve the quality of life for our individuals but our DSP staff as well. This will only help to keep our DSP's that are passionate about what they do working along side of our individuals that deserve to have the most meaningful life possible. This will also help to ensure that programs are able to support both individuals and DSP's to their fullest potential.

**I am submitting this testimony for these reasons.**

**First, I want to show my support for the funding that is included for transportation in the budget submitted by Director Davis.** This will help to ensure that all of our individuals are getting out into the community and exploring new options at all times. It will benefit for individuals that are currently out of our range to be able to attend the programs of their choice. With the funding currently in place it is difficult to accommodate the community exploration as much as some individuals would enjoy doing. So many individuals would benefit from this tremendously on a day to day basis.

**Second, I want to share the need for updated rates for day services for individuals with developmental disabilities** I wanted to share a story with you of a DSP that recently resigned her position with us. With the funding in place it is difficult to pay our front-line staff what they are worth. They are the ones that are in the grind day in and day out ensuring the best possible services for our individuals, yet due to funding they get the short end. We recently had a DSP that was amazing, day in and day out she had all the right stuff positive attitude, engaging, insight really had a connection with all our individuals they adored her. She had to resign her position due to the pay and needing to support her family. As we always have, we do pay a higher rate to our DSP 's then average as we know what their worth but funding puts a cap on what you can do with this as well. She was heartbroken as she has always known this is her calling and what she was meant to do. It is saddening when you hear a DSP pour out their heart and soul to you about all the success and accomplishments they have encountered

and how passionate they are about the ones we serve but still must make the decision to leave. All for what? She had to leave her purpose, her Why to support her family. We need to find a way to support these DSP's that are passionate about what they do and pour their heart and souls into it day in and day out. These are the DSP's that need to be supporting our individuals pushing them to be the best versions of themselves!!!! We still hear from this DSP on a regular basis and she would in a heartbeat rejoin the team if she were able to support both her family and our individuals. This story is heartbreaking, but I am certain it is not the only one of this kind out there. I think there are several natural DSP's working in different fields not serving due to simply pay.

**Finally, I want to show my support Director Millers budget initiatives**

We currently serve several individuals with high behavior and medical needs. We work well at getting these individuals out into the community while working on socialization multiple times a week. We continue to collaborate with Elevating beyond for employment options, Meals on Wheels for volunteering experiences, local coffee shops and restaurants for socialization skills just to name a few. They have been introduced to the world of social media while working on daily living skills during our Facebook live cooking show that airs weekly. The increase in funding could open so many more opportunities for these individuals that have current barriers that we can help them to break through. I want to provide all my support on this initiative as I think it will provide so many more opportunities and options for everyone in need at this time.

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,

Danielle Horne, Program Director

Dreamshine at Autumn Lakes

614-271-8999

