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Ohio Senate  
Finance Committee  
May 23, 2019

Chairperson Dolan and Esteemed Senate Finance Committee Members,

I am Bob Gaston and writing to provide testimony on behalf of ARC Industries, Inc. where I serve as the CEO. ARC Industries, Inc. serves approximately 2,000 individuals with developmental disabilities in Central Ohio. We currently employ 370 full-time staff members to provide adult day supports, vocational and employment services and transportation.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to Governor DeWine, Director Davis, the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, and the Ohio House of Representatives who, separately and collectively, have made an unprecedented investment in services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. I am appreciative of the administration and the Ohio House's proposal to invest in the homemaker/personal care service to help increase the average hourly wage paid to Direct Support Professionals (DSP's) providing that service. This enhanced funding will have a significant impact on addressing the workforce crisis that is occurring across the State of Ohio. Along with providing consistent quality services, DSP's are working the front-lines everyday to ensure the health and safety of those we serve. I believe all DSP's which includes both homemaker/personal care and those working in adult day and employment services should be able to earn a livable wage. As an advocate committed to providing services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families, this investment will ensure consistent quality services are being provided in Ohio.

The developmental disabilities services field agrees on the direction and actions to be taken to increase our support and positive outcomes for individuals with disabilities and their valued DSP's. On behalf of ARC Industries, Inc., our staff and the individuals and families we support, I encourage you, Senator Dolan and Members of this Committee, to support the proposed budget provisions relevant to the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities. Together we will succeed.

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

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Gaston', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Bob Gaston, CEO  
ARC Industries, Inc.