

Ohio Senate
Finance Committee
May 28, 2019

Chairperson Dolan and Esteemed Senate Finance Committee Members,

I am Jennifer Rocco and writing to provide testimony on behalf of Koinonia Homes where I serve as the Associate Director of Waiver. Koinonia's mission is to serve people with developmental disabilities, including intellectual disabilities, those with complex conditions and individuals with a dual diagnosis. Koinonia serves approximately 550 individuals through an entire range of residential and day program services. Our 600+ employees work across seven counties in Northeast Ohio.

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 wage of DSPs providing that service. A DSP has a tremendous impact on their quality of life. DSP's need to have skills and knowledge to support the different needs individuals have such as behavioral challenges, being medical fragile, working through trauma, etc. Individuals thrive when they have consistent people in their life that they trust. DSP's earning a higher wage would allow them to stay and make this their career. As an agency committed to providing services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, the investment helps ensure my agency can continue to provide our array of services.

The developmental disabilities services field is in agreement on the direction and actions to be taken to increase our support and positive outcomes for individuals with disabilities and their valued DSPs. On behalf of my agency, my staff, and the individuals we support, I encourage you, Senator Dolan and Members of this Committee, to support the proposed budget provisions relevant to the Department of Developmental Disabilities. Together we will succeed.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jennifer Rocco, Assistant Director, Waiver
Koinonia Homes Inc.