



Ohio Senate
Finance Committee
May 28, 2019

Chairperson Dolan and Esteemed Senate Finance Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on behalf of Koinonia Homes, Inc. where I serve as the Director of Health Care Services. I oversee the nursing staff and overall health of the 550 individuals that are served in Mahoning, Summit and Cuyahoga counties, in various settings, with a variety of physical, psychological and social needs.

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. As you are aware, individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities are often hospitalized more frequently, for longer periods, and experience more adverse outcomes than those of the general population which is why continuity of care with DSPs who are familiar with the individuals is so important. Increased wages, promotes stable staffing which can impact overall Medicaid expenditures associated with unnecessary hospitalizations and longer lengths of stays by recognizing symptoms earlier, ensuring preventative care is being conducted and through health advocacy efforts that DSPs often provide to the individuals. As an agency committed to serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, the investment helps ensure my agency can continue to provide our array of services with a stable workforce that helps ensure continuity of care for the clients served.

The developmental disabilities services industry agrees on the direction and actions that are necessary 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,

Lianne Bright, RN
Koinonia Homes, Inc