



Ohio Senate  
Finance Committee  
May 28, 2019

Chairperson Dolan and Esteemed Finance Committee Members,

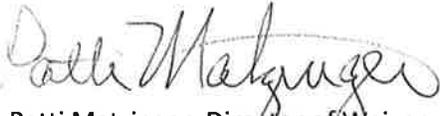
I am Patti Matzinger and I am writing to provide testimony on behalf of Koinonia Homes where I serve as the Director of Waiver services. Koinonia Homes provides services to approximately 550 individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in community residential and vocational settings, throughout 7 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 Direct Support Professional's (DSP) providing that service. This group of professionals has been under compensated for the 40+ years I have been working in the field. DSP's are the people who serve selfishly, making sure individuals with I/DD are safe, healthy and integrated into the fabric of our communities. The DSP is expected to deal with difficult behavioral challenges, serious medical events and interventions, play the role of chauffeur, not to mention teaching skills and supporting people in individualized ways that provide successful outcomes. All this and our DSP's make less than a server at a fast food restaurant resulting in high turnover rates. The turnover of the DSP's, because of poor pay has many harmful effects, including lack of growth for the person with I/DD, continued financial impact on the system, and a devaluing of the I/DD industry because wages keep DSPs in the cycle of poverty.

As an agency committed to providing quality 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 agrees 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 provision relevant to the Department of Developmental Disabilities. Together we will succeed.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Patti Matzinger".

Patti Matzinger, Director of Waiver  
Koinonia Homes, Inc.