

ANNE GRADY SERVICES

A non-profit agency
whose mission is to
provide dignity, respect
and quality service to people with
disabilities and their families,
always offering
opportunities to reach their
highest potential.

*ANNE GRADY CENTER
NOAH'S HOUSE (RESPIRE FOR CHILDREN)
VOCATIONAL SERVICES
THERAPY SERVICES
COMMUNITY RESIDENCES
SUPPORTED LIVING SERVICES
JACK MIXON NATATORIUM
DISCOVERY DAY PROGRAM
ADULT RESPITE PROGRAM
PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM
COMMUNITY TRANSIT SERVICES (CTS)*

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An Equal Opportunity Employer
and Service Provider

Ohio Senate
Finance Committee

May 28, 2019

Chairperson Dolan and Esteemed Senate Finance Committee Members,

I am Roger Fortener and am writing to provide testimony on behalf of Anne Grady Services where I serve as the Executive Director. We are an agency that serves children and adults who have intellectual disabilities. We provide ICF and Waiver residential services, day programming, respite care, and transportation services in Northwest Ohio. We serve over 150 residentially and over that number in day programming. We also serve around 500 people in transportation. We provide services in two counties and have approximately 400 employees.

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. This will help us recruit and retain our DSPs who provide these services. It will help our staff, who currently need to work many additional hours (overtime), to obtain a paycheck that will help them with living expenses. In turn, this will help the individuals we serve. If staff are working too many hours because they need the money or we are short-staffed, they can become burned out. Higher wages and working fewer hours can help decrease burnout and is a clear benefit to the people we serve.

We also support changes in the ICF franchise permit fee, changes in transportation services with a requirement of a study committee, and a reduction in the ICF quality indicators. The franchise permit fee will allow us to serve children who present challenges and keep them from entering developmental centers. The transportation changes can help us recoup our costs in providing needed transportation services to individuals with disabilities. Finally, a reduction in the number of quality indicators will help us reduce unnecessary documentation, free up staff time, and allow us to provide better care. As an agency committed to providing services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, the investment helps ensure our 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 our agency, our 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,

Roger Fortener, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Anne Grady Services