

Dear Representative Robert Cole Sprague,

The following is my written testimony for the public hearings on March 17, 2015 regarding the proposed elimination of independent providers in the Ohio state budget starting next year.

My name is Ken Oster, I am 47 and a beneficiary of an Independent Options waiver in Hamilton County, Ohio. A traumatic brain injury as a teen has slowly eaten away both gross and fine motor skills and rendered me nonverbal. I am, however, completely cognizant with a flair for independence.

I have chosen to work with independent providers exclusively after the nightmare of dealing with agencies. My help is now consistent, dependable and less stressed, probably because they are making more of a fair wage than those in an agency. I have no desire to return to agency care. This works for me. The proposed phasing out of independent providers is like lopping off a working hand just because of a wart. To me it is a lose-lose scenario. Please reconsider it.

Thank you,

Ken Oster
3735 Llewellyn Ave
Cincinnati, OH 45223