

Chairman Burke, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Member Cafaro, and members of the committee. Good afternoon. My name is Renee Wood. I am the secretary and treasurer for Advocacy United, whose members I represent here today. I am also a member of the Olmstead Task Force, and the recent past Chair of the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council.

I am here to speak on 2 separate issues. 1) To keep the "DD Bill of Rights" in its' original form by STRIKING the language changes proposed in H.B. 64. And 2) Place back into H.B. 64 the \$22 to \$30 million that was cut from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities.

First, regarding the proposed language changes to Section 5123.62 of H.B. 64, commonly referred to as the "DD Bill of Rights", these should be stricken from this H.B. 64 for the following reasons; These changes essentially reinterpret the original intent of this Bill of Rights, which was to allow people with DD to have a voice in what they desire from life. Most importantly is, these changes were made without any consultation with those whom these Rights directly protect! People just don't re-write another group's Bill of Rights - that's just unthinkable! Since this language was changed with no input from those who have I/DD, this reason alone should be enough to throw it out.

But I have more reasons why this language should be deleted from H.B. 64. People covered under I/DD can have normal intelligence, but have significant physical/medical impairments with onset before the age of 22. The proposed language seems to assume everyone covered under DD services is intellectually impaired, and therefore needs assistance with making decisions. The language before you, subjugates all of our voice to our parent's will, without any distinction for ability. In saying that, I am not suggesting ALL people with intellectual disabilities are incapable of making decisions, I'm merely pointing out that the proposed language can be interpreted as REQUIRING parental involvement for ALL people receiving DD services which would include, people with DD who have no intellectual or reasoning deficits, including persons like myself who have 2 college degrees, married, with my own family.

I realize parents want to be included in their adult child's life when it comes to important decisions. The current form of the DD Bill of Rights does not EXCLUDE parental involvement in decision making, but rather this involvement depends on the strength of the parent/adult child relationship, as it does with those without DD. The truth is, some people with I/DD don't want their parent's involvement in their personal affairs as is true with some non-disabled adults. For

the above reasons the DD Bill of Rights is just the wrong venue for parents to seek the involvement they desire.

Secondly, a \$22 million to \$30 million cut to the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities budget would eliminate new monies that were slated for 3,000 new Waivers slots to get people who want out of institutions into homes of their own with appropriate supports. Some people in these institutions have been waiting 13 years for a Waiver to start life in community. Many who are waiting have said they feel like they're in prison. To ask them to wait any longer would not only be inhumane, but it would be equivalent to being held hostage!

The loss of these dollars will also cut the planned pay increase to direct care workers, who do the most intimate daily care for people with DD, yet get paid the least in the DD system, excluding those with DD who are sheltered workshop employees! For these reasons I implore you to reinstate the \$22 million to \$30 million back to the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities.

Thank you for your time.