

# Testimony against HB 64

Chairman Burke and members of the Ohio Senate Medicaid Committee, I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify today. My name is Dan Acree the father and Legal guardian of Anthony Acree. I first would like to state that I am grateful for the Ohio Home Care Program that gives me the ability to care for my son at home. Life would be very difficult if not for this program. Anthony has been on the Ohio Home Care Program since May of 1991. At age 2 he suffered from an anoxic brain injury, lack of oxygen to the brain, leaving him with the developmental capacity of a new born child and many physical disabilities. The first 10 years of being on the OHCP were very trying years. Agency after agency failing not able to have enough staff to provide care for my son. I would give agencies any ware from 1 ½ to 2 years to try to find enough staff to do their part of my sons care. Six agencies, 10 years and many days with very little sleep not only proved to be very difficult physically but emotionally as well. My case manager at that time brought to my attention that there is another option I may be interested in pursuing and that was to use Independent providers. Since then my sons care has been very stable. I have one nurse for 14 years 2 nurses for just over 10 years and one nurse for 2 years.

I do understand that language to eliminate Independent providers has been removed from the bill and is to be taken up by itself as a separate issue. My concern is where do things go from here. I watched the webinar on self direction and have read numerous article on a variety of subjects trying to understand how this will impact my families life. Twenty four years of being a part of the OHCP I have seen many changes to the program but none as severe as the changes that are coming. I know the question is not will things change. Change is coming. The question is what will this change look like. I watched the webinar on self direction and read many articles on how things could be changed to. I am very confused as to where things are going. Questions that I have asked are not being answered clearly. I am terrified that I am going to lose the stability that I have worked so hard for. The nurses that care for my son know him as well as they know their own children and now that quality of care is possibly being jeopardized. I am hoping that you the lawmakers understand the impact that you will have on the decisions that you will make. I am asking that you take the time to get this right and not to impose a fix as you go type model as what was done with the new health care laws that were recently passed by the federal government. Having a wife that passed away from kidney disease I agreed that there needed to be health care but it needed to be done in the right way. I hope you will do things the right way. There needs to be more education on proposed changes that are going to affect our lives. It is very hard to make informed decisions when you don't understand what your choices are. I am hoping that the words of myself and everyone here testifying today do not fall on deaf ears.

I would also like to express that I oppose the proposed closure of Developmental centers as well as the proposed elimination of sheltered workshops. I know individuals that benefit from both. I personally don't understand why people with disabilities are being the target of budget reform. It's just not right.

Thank you for allowing me to testify.