



Chairman Burke, Ranking Member Cafaro and Members of the Senate Medicaid Committee:

My name is Mark Davis, President of the Ohio Provider Resource Association (OPRA). OPRA is a statewide association of 160 private providers who serve individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. I am here to talk about the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities funding provisions in Am. Sub. H.B. 64 and to request that you fully fund the DD budget as introduced.

I have worked in Ohio's developmental disabilities system for many years and have never witnessed the kinds of diverse pressures for systemic change we are now facing. CMS has recently published significant rule clarifications governing integration in their home and community based waivers. The Department of Justice is actively looking at states across the country to ensure compliance with the ADA and Disability Rights Ohio is on record with the threat of litigation. Funding and workforce challenges remain an everyday threat and we continue to see individuals and families in immediate need of services.

That being said, over the last fifteen years the state has retreated from its obligations to fund developmental disability services. From FY 2001 through FY 2014 (exclusive of the transfer of the ICF program and the TDD Waiver from ODM to DODD) the Department of Developmental Disabilities has actually seen a reduction of state general revenue funds of almost 7%. To be clear, I am not talking about failing to keep pace with inflation, (36% over that time period). I am saying there are less general revenue funds committed to DODD today than there was in FY 2001!

In response to all of the above, Director Martin and the Administration announced with the introduction of HB 64 an historic investment of new monies into the developmental disabilities system. This historic investment is elegantly designed to address the multiple pressures our system faces. This new investment is an interrelated and interwoven package of initiatives that demand to be considered in their entirety. One may also argue that it provides a legitimate defense against outside litigation. Allow me to touch on some of the critical components:

Supporting those in crisis and waiting for services

Funds 2000 new Individual Options Waivers

- New waivers for those who require emergency services
- Reduces waiting lists
- New waivers for those currently in ICFs who wish to leave (first time ever offered)
- Targeted numbers to be served in Shared Living (Adult Foster Care)

Funds 1000 new SELF Waivers

- Reduces waiting lists
- Offers specialized supports for individuals with complex behavioral needs
- Offers ability to self-direct services
- Cost-effective service model



Strengthens Ohio's DD Home and Community Based Waiver System

Converts Transitions DD Waiver to Individual Options Waiver

- Increases service options for individuals on Transitions Waiver
- Increases Provider pool
- Increases day program and employment options
- Increases simplicity for individuals and families and reduces administrative complexity by transitioning from four waivers to three

Direct Support Staff 6% Rate Increase in Waivers, 2% in ICF's

- Recognizes existing workforce crisis
- Current direct care wages average between \$8.50 and \$9.50/hr.
- Many direct care staff work more than one job
- Many direct care staff are themselves on public assistance
- Improves recruitment and retention with current turnover at 47%
- Hiring and sustaining a quality direct care workforce is the single biggest long-term challenge in Ohio's DD system
- Direct care staff deserve to be paid a sustainable wage that honors their work. People with disabilities deserve to have reliable, quality direct care staff.

Funds Behavior Support Add-on

- Incentivizes providers to serve individuals with complex behavioral challenges
- Supports additional staffing challenges in serving individuals with complex behavioral challenges
- DODD administration of new behavior support add-on funding ensures greater consistency of application and availability

Add Nursing Services to the Individual Options Waiver

- Incentivizes providers to serve individuals with complex medical needs
- Increases quality of supports
- Enhances coordination of care
- Facilitates inclusion of TDD waiver into IO Waiver

It is important to note that these initiatives have statewide impact and are most appropriately funded by the state and not left to individual county DD boards to fund.

Due to the acceptance of LSC cost projections, funding was cut significantly in the House passed budget. Without a restoration of those funds the new initiatives are in jeopardy. We cannot pick and choose as



to which of these initiatives are more important. They are a package. We request that funding be restored to the Administration's proposed levels so that our system can benefit as a whole.

I have a few other comments about the budget.

TPP

We are also aware of and support the county boards serving people with IDD's request for tangible personal property tax relief if additional funds can be identified.

Independent Providers

State's employer liability with independent providers in the Medicaid program appears very real and has the potential to increase cost in our system and take resources away from people with disabilities

OPRA represents all DD providers in Ohio, including both agency and independent providers. We do not think it is helpful for any situation to pit one against the other.

We believe an acceptable compromise could be close at hand and are prepared to continue to meet with the administration and other stakeholders to negotiate an agreeable compromise that does not take resources away from people with disabilities.

Developmental Centers

We stand ready to work with DODD to assist in transition planning for people who choose to move from the state-operated developmental centers to services by private ICF or waiver providers.

Housing

For people coming into the waiver system, we need to increase the availability of safe and affordable housing so people have real options in where and with whom they live.

APSI

We support the additional funding to APSI, especially to help increase their staff wages.

Remove the "R" word

It was on July 7, 2009 that SB 79 was signed into law in Ohio and on October 6, 2009 DODD was born, removing the "R" word from the department's name. County boards removed the "R" word from their names as well. The bill passed both chambers unanimously. It's simply time to take the next step. We recommend that DODD develop a plan to remove the "R" word from all Ohio statute and rule.

Thank you for your time and attention. I am happy to elaborate on our approach or to answer any questions.