

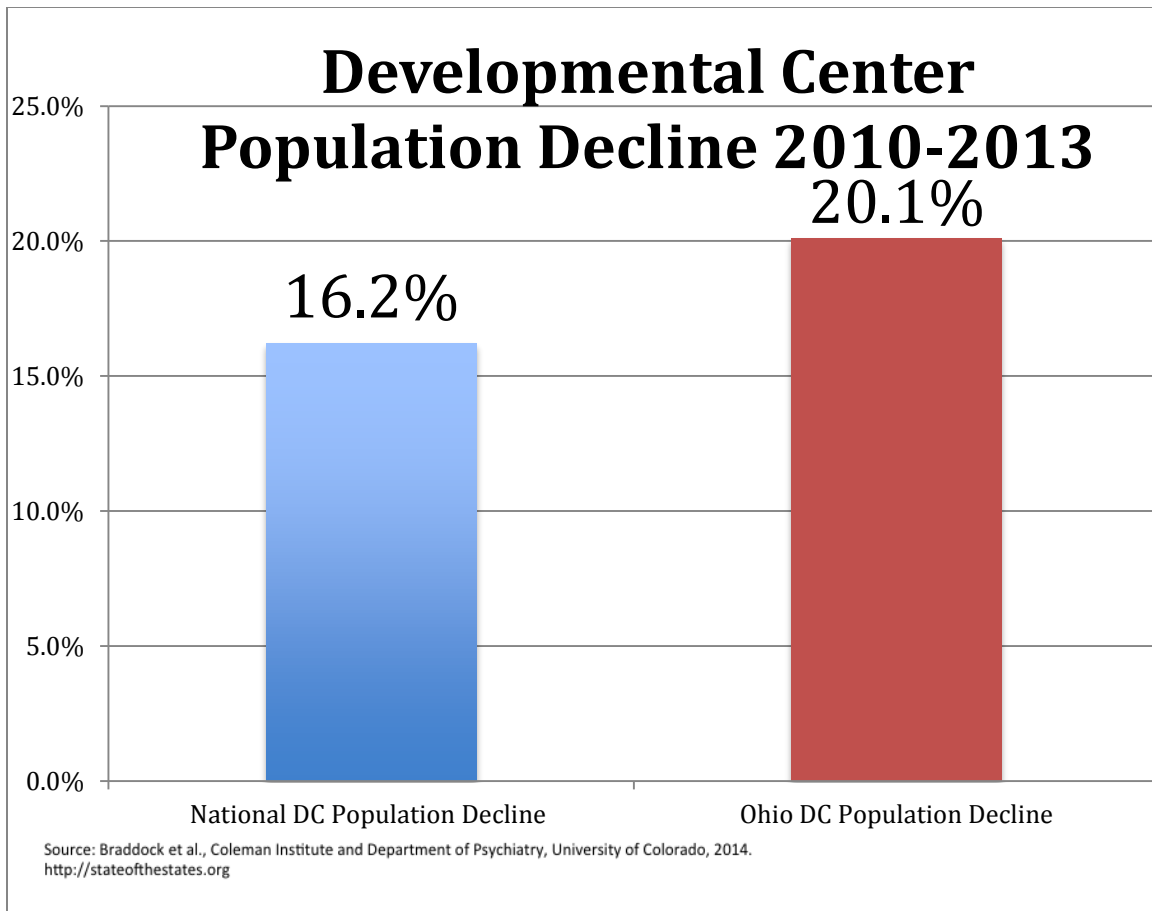
Thank you Chairman Burke and Ranking Member Cafaro for allowing me to testify today. My name is Monty Blanton and I retired from the Gallipolis Developmental Center with 31 years of service. I currently work for OCSEA as a field staff with a speciality in the Dept. of Developmental Disabilities. I wanted to talk a little bit about some of the myths that have been told about the state Developmental Centers by opponents like Disability Rights Ohio.

DRO Myths include:

- 1) Ohio is slower to reduce Developmental Centers than other states.
- 2) Ohio is slower in building waiver capacity and Home and Community Based Services.
- 3) Ohio Developmental Centers are too expensive.
- 4) Ohio is segregating large number of individuals in ICFs and Ohio must “rebalance” its system of residential services.
- 5) Developmental Centers have outlived their usefulness.

Myth # 1: Ohio is slower to reduce Developmental Centers than other states.

The facts show that not only is Ohio in line with the national trend in eliminating Developmental Center beds, in the last few years, Ohio is well *above* the national average in moving individuals out of the Developmental Centers. In 2010, Ohio had 1,374 residents living in the state DCs. As of May 11, that number is 897 or a reduction rate of 35 percent. You can see by the chart below, over the last several years Ohio has easily outpaced the national average of moving people out of state facilities.

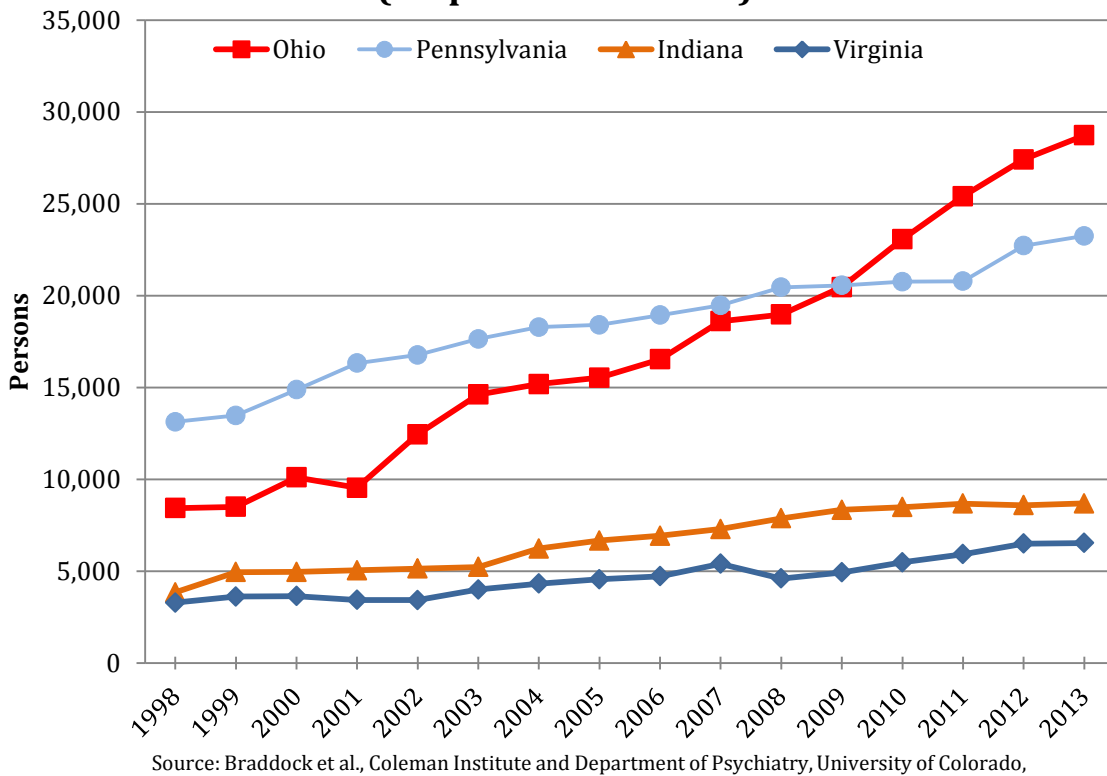


Myth # 2: Ohio is slow in building waiver capacity and community-based services.

While aggressively reducing developmental center capacity, there has been a huge upswing in the numbers of individuals receiving community residential supports. Not only has Ohio outpaced surrounding states in the addition of waivers and supported living settings, it also spends more per capita than the national average on Home and Community Based Services.

As you can see by the chart below, Ohio’s community residential system has grown at a much faster pace than Pennsylvania, Indiana and Virginia. In addition, Ohio spends about 15 percent more than the national average on Home and Community Based Services.

State Comparison of Small I/DD Settings (six persons or fewer)

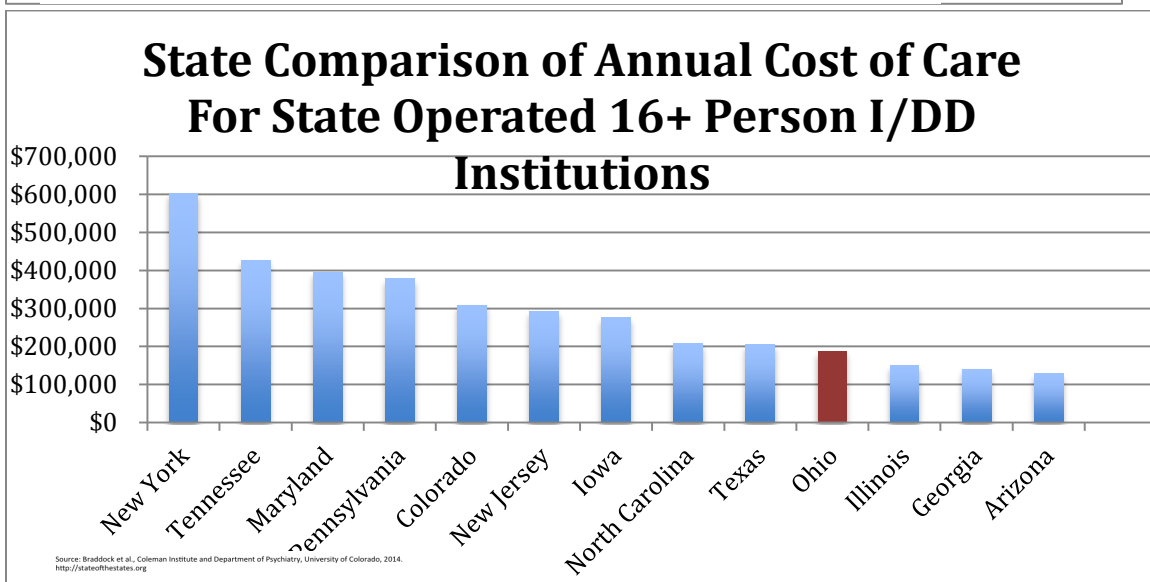
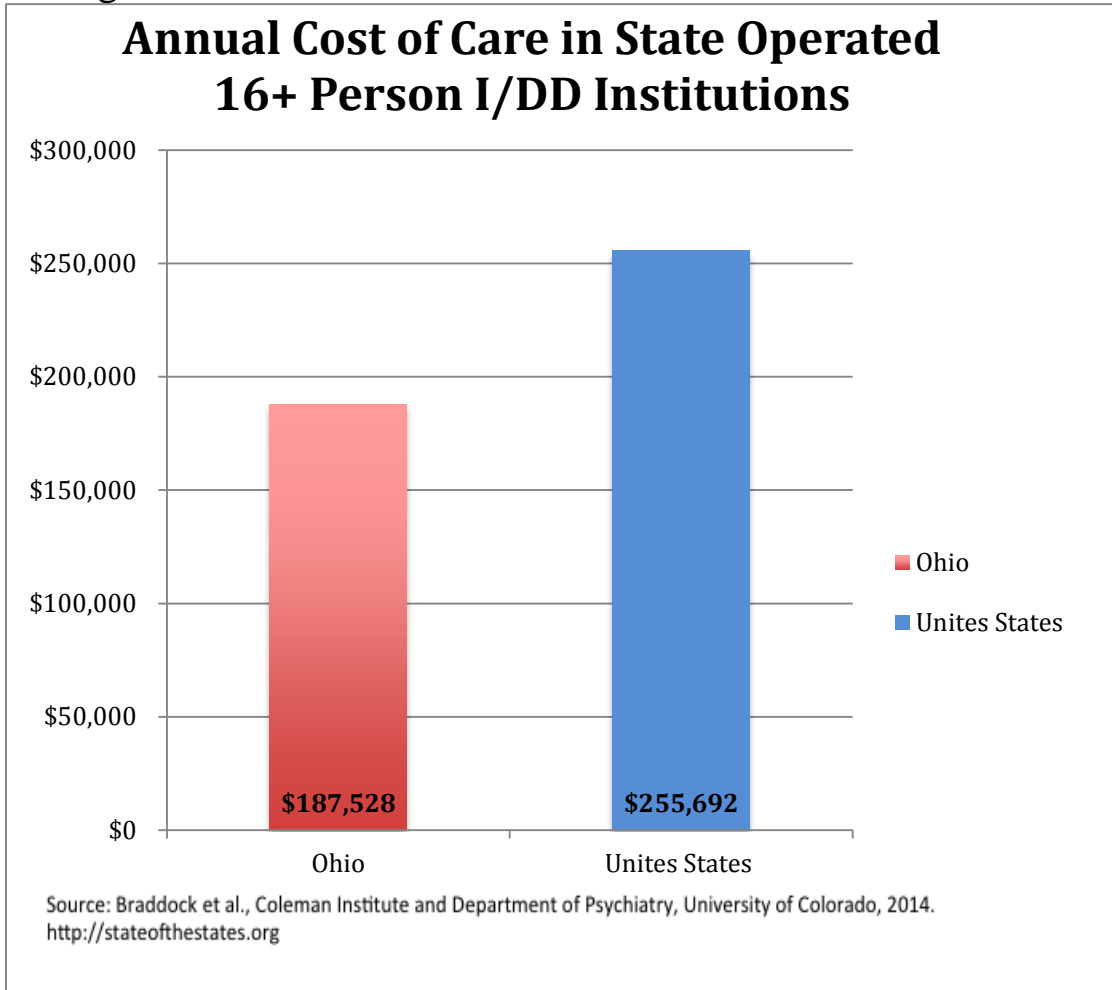


Myth # 3: Ohio's Developmental Centers are too expensive.

Opponents of Developmental Centers claim that the facilities are more expensive than a waiver, but fail to recognize that individuals in the centers need more services and supports, therefore would cost more in ANY setting. A recent study by the Legislative Service Commission showed that, all things being equal, community services are in fact likely to cost *more* than the DCs for the same individuals due to ancillary costs, such as transportation, that congregate settings already factor in.

In reality, Ohio's developmental centers operate efficiently, with Ohio ranking 12th leanest in terms of cost. In terms of the national

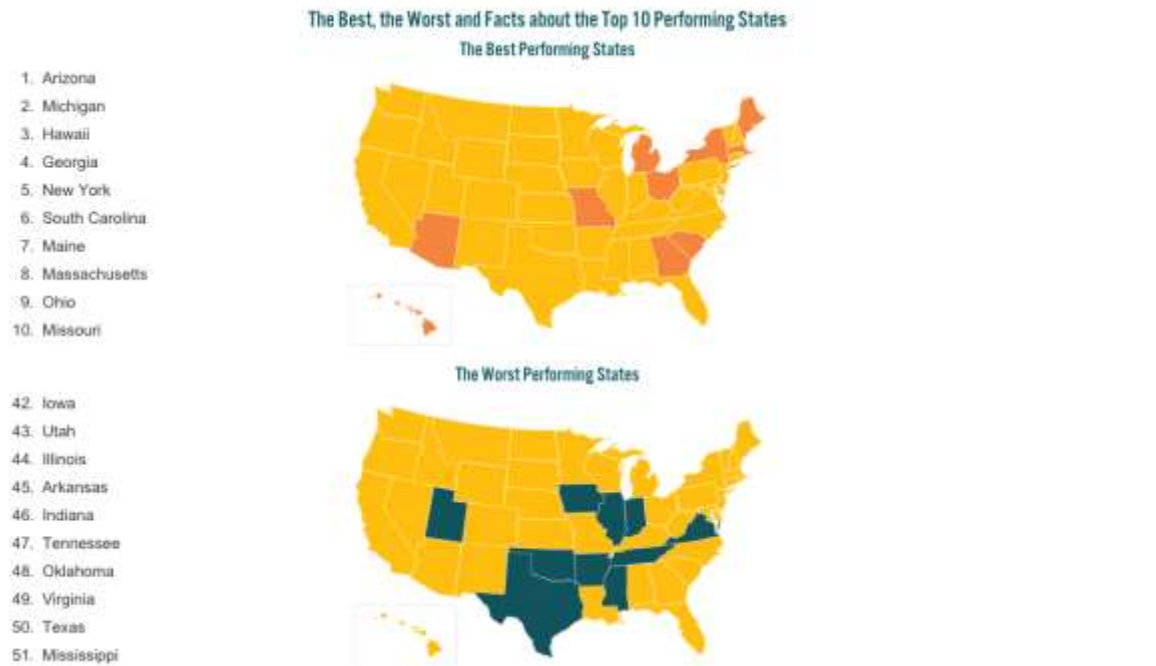
average, Ohio's DC cost is 27 percent lower than the national average.



Myth # 4: Ohio is segregating large numbers of individuals in DCs and ICFs and must “rebalance” its system of residential services by closing Developmental Centers and putting resources toward HCBS.

Over the last 15 years, Ohio, like other states, took extreme measures to ensure our Home and Community Based Services expanded. Now, the vast majority of individuals in the IDD system in Ohio are served in the community. In fact, Ohio is ranked the *9th best state* in the most recent “Case for Inclusion” analysis in terms of promoting independence, tracking quality of life, keeping families together and promoting productivity.

Additionally, Ohio’s system has been well “rebalanced” for some time now and is one of 43 states to *have already met the 80/80 Community Standard*. The 80/80 Community Standard is used as a metric to gauge state support of inclusiveness for people with disabilities. Ohio has more than 80 percent of individuals being served in the DD system in community residential settings and has spent >80 percent of all resources in Ohio on community support.



Source: The Case for Inclusion 2014, United Cerebral Palsy

Myth #5: Developmental Centers have outlived their usefulness.

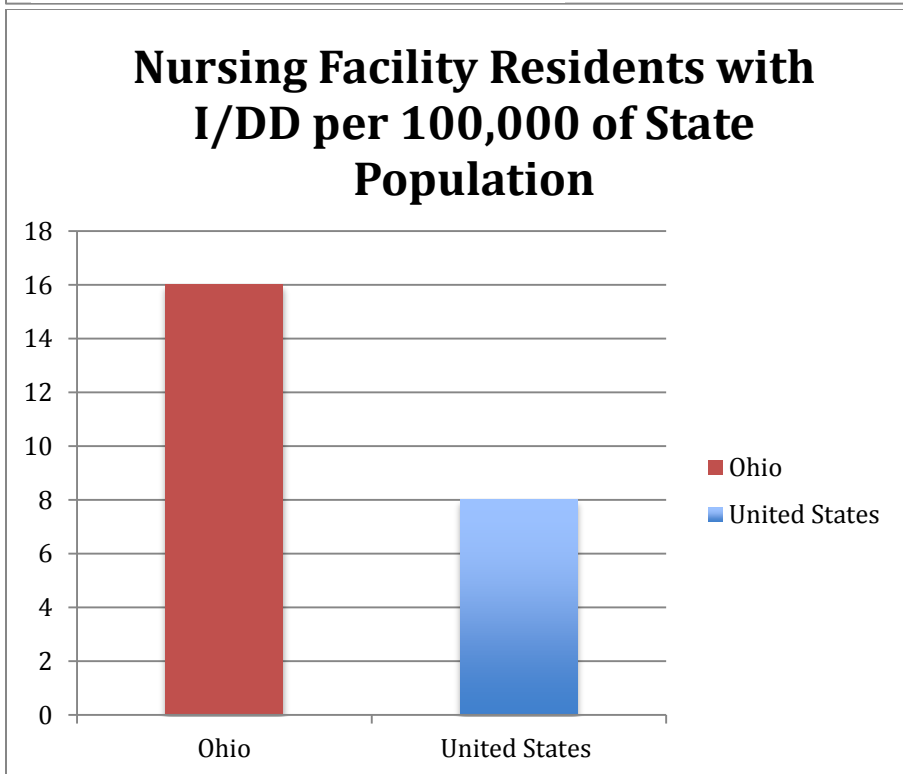
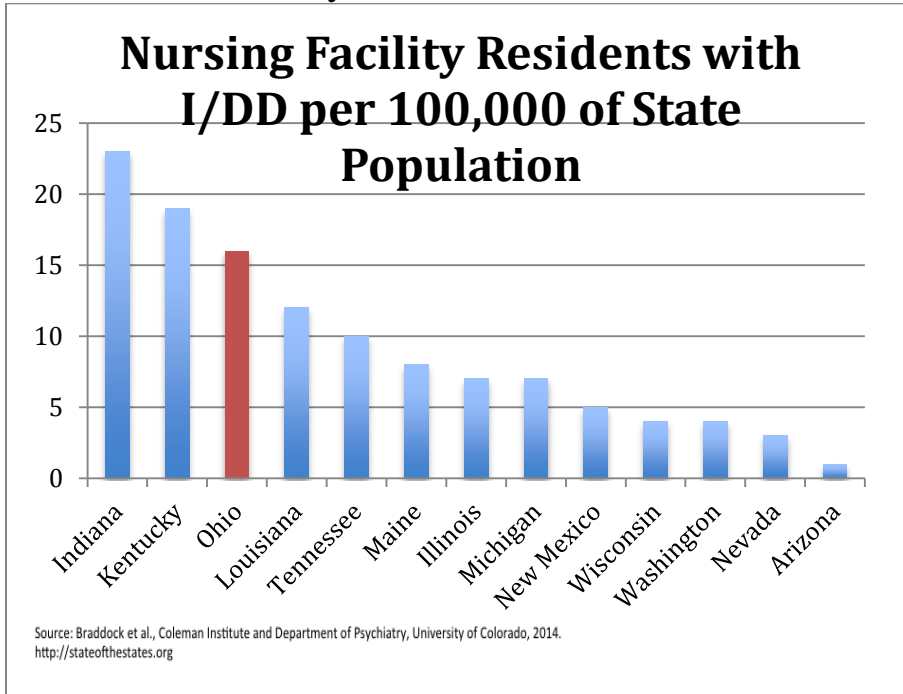
Developmental Centers are still a vital part of the spectrum of residential services in Ohio and should continue to be so. As this committee has already heard, most DC admissions today are individuals who have committed a crime, have a dual diagnosis of mental illness and developmental disabilities or have such severe behavioral needs that only specialists like our DC staff are capable of taking care of them. Dr. Stephen Ruedrich told the committee last week that there is still not the capacity in Ohio that would be needed to take care of these individuals with such complex psychiatric and behavioral needs.

But let me give you another reason why DCs have not outlived their usefulness. Ohio is one of the top states in the country with individuals with disabilities living in adverse settings. Ohio is 7th among all states with individuals with developmental disabilities still residing in nursing facilities: *double the national average*. That's not acceptable. Nursing facilities are not an appropriate placement for individuals with developmental disabilities; I think we can all agree to that. Our concern is that with these two closures even more individuals will be forced to be served in adverse settings such as nursing homes.

In conclusion: Ohio has already rebalanced its system of residential services. We've closed DCs, we've downsized them, we've built community capacity. We are not behind other states by *any* of the most important measures for inclusion, in fact we're ahead. What will happen if these two developmental centers close, however, will be to tip the balance in the other direction. That could have tragic consequences.

We ask that you please support the closure commission language, keep 10 Developmental Centers in Ohio, ensure that the Developmental Center line items are fully funded and support true

choice for these families. The families and guardians whose sons or daughters now live in the state DCs chose that facility because there was no where else for them to go. Please don't rob them of their choice now. We appreciate all the hard work of this committee. Thank you.



Source: Braddock et al., Coleman Institute and Department of Psychiatry, University of Colorado, 2014.

<http://stateofthestates.org>