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COMMUNITY**
CENTRAL OHIO

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March 17, 2017

Chair Romanchuk, Ranking Member Sykes, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Bev Soult and I serve as the President/CEO of Cancer Support Community Central Ohio located in Franklin County. We are part of a national organization that is headquartered in DC. We have a Research and Training Institute and Cancer Policy Institute that provides up-to-date information and key issues that are important to patients with cancer and their loved ones and a place where they you can make their voice heard at the local and national level. We have more than 10,000 people in our national cancer registry. Our programs are an integral part of the cancer journey treating the whole person, not just the cancer.

The American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer has mandated every accredited cancer center must screen every cancer patient for distress and then refer to a community-based organization for services. Research has proven by participating in our programs that there is better adherence to doctor appointments, less readmissions to the emergency room which provides huge cost savings along with improved quality of life.

Our mission is to ensure that all people affected by cancer are empowered by knowledge, strengthened by action and sustained by community. We do that by providing programs and services at *no cost* to all people with cancer, regardless of the diagnosis and stage and no matter where they are in survivorship. Cancer doesn't just impact the person with cancer it impacts their entire network. That is why we also provide programs and services for family members, support person and caregivers and children. All our programs are evidence-based and facilitated by a licensed mental health professional or a professional expert. We provide more than 65 programs a month on and off-site and serve more than 10,000 people.

We are also a member of the Ohio Association of Non-Profit Organizations (OANO). OANO provides a number of resources and tools for the non-profit sector, and they first introduced us to the Standards for Excellence Program. This program—often referred to as the “Standards”—is very simply a voluntary accreditation for the non-profit world. As straightforward as this may seem, the process to get fully accredited and sealed by the Standards council is nothing short of transformative. A full, thorough review of every aspect of the non-profit organization is done, ensuring that an organization is not just legally compliant, but adhering to all best practices from human resources, board governance to financial auditing. The Standards seal truly means something at the end of this lengthy and rigorous process. We secured our Standards seal and went through a vigorous renewal process as our Board and organization feel that seal of excellence confirms we operate with the highest of standards.

My Board Chair supported this voluntary decision to go through the Standards program without knowing exactly what to expect. We emerged as a stronger, more viable non-profit using the most effective and efficient practices possible. We are truly better because of it.

I feel it so important that I am asking for support for a very inexpensive investment from the state that will truly leave an impact on the non-profit sector state-wide. We are asking for \$50,000 from the General Revenue Fund- administered through ODJFS- for a Standards for Excellence Scholarship Program. This will allow 24 non-profits from six sectors of the state to become fully accredited. In the world of non-profits, the cost to attend our required clinic series is often not able to be built into the slim margins in which we work. This scholarship would be aimed at organizations that could truly benefit from this program but possibly cannot afford to include within their budget.

The benefits of this very conservative funding requests are multi-fold. The Standards produce non-profits to be stronger, more viable organizations that can better serve their mission; it also safeguards the State and the many charitable donors in Ohio who can have a third-party vetting system to check on the operations of a particular non-profit; and these non-profits will be more poised than ever to apply for and receive grants from other funding sources.

I urge your support for a sector that continues to give so much back to our great State and those living in it. This request is an important way to bolster our organizations with the proper tools and resources needed for optimization.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bev Sault".

Bev Sault, President & CEO
Cancer Support Community Central Ohio