

Testimony of Kim Mathews
Senate Finance Subcommittee on Health & Medicaid
Tuesday, May 14, 2019

Chairman Hackett, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Thomas, and Members of the Finance Sub-Committee on Health and Medicaid, my name is Kim Mathews. I live in Licking County, OH. I serve as the Co-Chair of the Children with Medical Handicaps (BCMh) Parent Advisory Council, and I serve as a founding member of the Ohio Cystic Fibrosis Legislative Task Force.

I stand before you today regarding the Ohio Department of Health's Children with Medical Handicaps (BCMh) program. The Mission of BCMh is to assure, through the development and support of high quality, coordinated systems, that children with special health care needs and their families obtain comprehensive care and services that are family centered, community based, and culturally sensitive.

Around 40,000 Ohio families rely on BCMh to cover the gaps when private insurance and other public programs will not.

The BCMh program is a payer of last resort. It helps families whose children are fighting life limiting genetic diseases receive comprehensive support in navigating insurance markets and coverage plans. BCMh assists families with huge financial burdens from increasing out-of-pocket costs, from narrowing provider networks, and limited services offered in both the private and public insurance market. **BCMh keeps families working and keeps them out of medical bankruptcy.**

I am grateful, as is the cystic fibrosis community, to the Governor and his Administration for the executive budget proposal that includes funding to continue strong support of the BCMh program by maintaining income eligibility and available services while retaining the program within the Ohio Department of Health. For 100 years, this program has a long successful history of being a safety-net for families with children who have serious medical conditions. **As a citizen of Ohio, I ask for your support of the Governor's Executive Budget proposal for the BCMh children's line item (440-505).**

Re: The BCMh Targeted Healthcare Services over 21 Program (line item 440-507) - I respectfully ask for your support of the House passed version of the bill, which restored funding to cover important services that were cut in previous years. This part of the BCMh program provides services to those over the age of 21 living with the life-threatening genetic disease of cystic fibrosis. This line item also assists hemophilia patients with securing private insurance coverage through the HIPP program (Health Insurance Premium Payment Program). Other **life sustaining services that will be restored under this are:** inpatient hospital stays, outpatient testing, and outpatient cystic fibrosis care center doctor visits.

In closing, the BCMh and cystic fibrosis families are wonderfully encouraged by the commitment the Governor and the House have shown for these important line items and we ask that you retain the provisions in the As Passed by House version. Again, these safety net programs help to keep our families working and we are beyond thankful.

I would be happy to answer any questions.