

**Testimony on H.B. 166: Main Operating Budget for FY 2020 – 2021 Senate Finance
Subcommittee on Health and Medicaid**

May 16, 2019

Good morning Chairman Hackett and members of the Finance Subcommittee on Health and Medicaid;

My name is Gloria Aron as a member of NOBLE I would like to speak about Ohio's Medicaid Expansion program and revenue challenges.

Although I am not on Medicaid my two great granddaughters are. Aria's mom will graduate from college in June to be an ultrasound tech in an Ohio hospital by fall with her own health insurance. Bailees mom was a heroin addict until she found out she was pregnant and went into treatment, she has been clean for two years working hard to accomplish goals she has set for herself. Both Little ones are doing great.

My story is successful and happy partly due to the CHIP program and having access to drug treatment programs. However, for far too many their stories are not. Our state continues to have high poverty levels and we rank 2nd in the country for drug overdose deaths. Medicaid Expansion funds the largest share of drug treatment programs plus healthcare for other single Ohioans and it brings over \$4 billion in Federal funds. 1.2 million Ohio children are covered by Medicaid, It also covers more than half the state's births. In all Medicaid provides health care insurance to about 3 million Ohioans who live near or at poverty. Medicaid expansion has been a widely beneficial addition to the state's programming, and I hope that you maintain the program as is and consider increasing funding during this cycle's budget deliberation.

We know Ohio must have a balanced budget passed by June and understand that this not an easy task. To have a healthy and safe Ohio we then must find adequate funding for all needed Health and Human Services. We urge you to carefully review all current tax cuts. In the 2018-19 budget there were 129 cuts that totaled more than \$9 billion a year in tax breaks, totaling more than what was spent on Medicaid. NOBLE is seeking fairness, we all pay taxes and everyone including corporations should pay their fair share. Today families earning the lowest wages are paying an average of 12.3% while the wealthiest pay only 6.5%.

Regarding revenue, I acknowledge the changes you have made to the LLC loophole to alleviate some of its damage, by applying the tax break to the first \$100,000 in business income rather than the first \$250,000 it does now. In your proposal you have also closed several other loopholes, including the motion picture tax credit and tax break for co-owners of private jets. While these changes are promising, we would like to see the savings used to benefit low income Ohioans by making the Earned Income Tax Credit refundable, increasing eligibility for daycare subsidies now as opposed to in the future, or for increasing funding for public transit.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

