



Ohio Association of Goodwill Industries
Senate Finance Subcommittee on Health and Medicaid
HB 166
May 16, 2019

Chair Hackett, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Thomas and members of the Senate Finance Subcommittee on Health and Medicaid, I am Emily Turner, the Executive Director of the Ohio Association of Goodwill Industries. Thank you for allowing me to speak with you today about removing a provision in HB 166 that would create a new workforce development program through the Department of Medicaid (ORC 5167.29; MCDCD35 Employment connection incentive programs).

Goodwill was founded more than 100 years ago by Rev. Edgar Helms, who created what might have been the very first workforce development program. He saw that impoverished individuals in his community needed employable skills, so he collected donated goods from his parishioners and created jobs for people to repair and sell those donations. Thus, providing people with training, employment, and dignity through that work.

Rev. Helm's legacy continues to this day. Each year, 3,500 people in Ohio secure employment with Goodwill's assistance. All of these individuals face barriers to employment, and often multiple barriers; many have disabilities or lived a lifetime in poverty. Goodwill works closely with the county Ohio Means Jobs offices and many of the 13 state agencies that administer over 100 workforce programs in Ohio.

We offer thousands of individuals the opportunity to gain vocational skills and reduce barriers to future employment. Last year in Ohio, Goodwill served over 70,000 individuals, helping them and their families not only with employment and vocational skill building but with counseling, case management, adult day services, and other family strengthening activities such as parenting classes.

It is our extensive experience with workforce development and family strengthening that brings me here today to request that the Senate remove an amendment to HB 166 that would require



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each Medicaid managed care organization to establish an employment connection program to assist Medicaid recipients in obtaining and maintaining employment. This amendment also provides for Medicaid managed care organizations to earn incentive payments based on their successes with their programs (ORC 5167.29; MCD35 Employment connection incentive programs).

It has been widely acknowledged that Ohio's workforce development system is complex and sometimes duplicative. This provision will only complicate a network that has made great strides in breaking down silos and streamlining administration. Along with the many qualified non-profit providers of employment services across the state, we are already providing a "hand up" to Medicaid recipients, and we do not receive financial incentives for our successes. Yet, we are always willing and able to do more to increase employment opportunities and decrease the number of individuals reliant on public benefits because it is our mission.

We encourage you to strike this provision from the budget. If there is a desire to develop services specifically targeted to Medicaid recipients, it only makes sense to utilize the expertise and qualified staff that already exists throughout the state of Ohio.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I will be happy to take any questions.

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