



Ohio Senate
Finance Committee
5/23/2019

Chairperson Dolan and Esteemed Committee Members,

I am Dave Rastoka and writing to provide testimony on behalf of Scioto Trails Inc where I serve as the owner and CEO. Scioto Trails provides supports and services to 39 people with disabilities in Ross and Pike Counties. We employ approximately 60 people to provide home maker and personal care needs to our residents. Out of those 60 employees, 45 of them our Direct Support Professionals, they are the most crucial part of our workforce. They are the people that provide the meal prep, the hygiene, assist with laundry and shopping and are the friends and sometimes the family members of the individuals with disabilities that we serve.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to Governor DeWine, Director Davis, the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, and the Ohio House of Representatives who, separately and collectively, have made an unprecedented investment in services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

I am appreciative of the administration's proposal to invest in the homemaker/personal care service to help increase the average wage of DSPs providing that service. I am even more appreciative for the commitment from your colleagues in the House to build off of the DeWine Administration's executive budget to further increase the average wage of a DSP providing the homemaker/personal care service. This increase is crucial to our workforce but more importantly to the entire DD services in Ohio. We cannot compete with the wages of the local Wal-Marts and even fast food establishments. Our applicant pool is shrinking due to our inability to provide an adequate wage for the work that is being performed. It is truly a serve crisis and without this wage increase, Ohio will have debilitating shortage of Direct Support Professionals across Ohio that will take years to rectify itself. I feel that this increase will not only allow us to bring in more qualified DSP applicants but it will have an enormous impact on our current DSP's morale and sense of value. As an agency committed to providing services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, the investment helps ensure my agency can continue to provide our array of services.

The developmental disabilities services field is in agreement on the direction and actions to be taken to increase our support and positive outcomes for individuals with disabilities and their valued DSPs. This is a compliment to the current administration under Governor DeWine, self-advocates, parents, families, county boards, private providers, and the Ohio House and Senate. On behalf of my agency, my staff, and the individuals we support, I encourage you, Senator Dolan and Members of this Committee, to support the proposed budget provisions relevant to the Department of Developmental Disabilities.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dave Rastoka
Owner
Scioto Trails Inc