



Ohio Senate  
Finance Committee  
May 28, 2019

Chairperson Dolan and Esteemed Senate Finance Committee Members,

I am Julie Abiecunas and I am writing to provide testimony on behalf of Koinonia Homes, Inc. where I serve as the Director of Koinonia Enterprises, which is our adult day, vocational, and employment services division. Koinonia's mission is to serve people with developmental disabilities, including intellectual disabilities, those with complex conditions and individuals with a dual diagnosis. Koinonia serves approximately 550 individuals, with over 300+ of these individuals in programming in Koinonia Enterprises. As an agency, we also employ 600+ people, with roughly 70 of these employees working in Koinonia Enterprises.

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 and the Ohio House's proposal to invest in the homemaker/personal care service to help increase the average wage of DSPs providing that service. Our DSP's at Koinonia are truly the backbone and heart of our agency and across our field, as they provide the services, programming, and care to the individuals we work with. The work they do day in and day out is impactful and critical but can be demanding as well – and the amount of work does not accurately reflect in the pay that they currently receive.

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 agrees on the direction and actions to be taken to increase our support and positive outcomes for individuals with disabilities and their valued DSPs. 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. Together we will succeed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julie Abiecunas, Director of Koinonia Enterprises  
Koinonia Homes, Inc.