



Ohio Senate  
Finance Committee  
May 28, 2019

Chairperson Dolan and Esteemed Senate Finance Committee Members,

I am Julie Wagner, and I am the Chief People Officer at Koinonia. We provide services to over 550 individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities throughout Northeast Ohio and we have over 632 employees. Services we provide include residential, day programs and employment for our individuals served. I am writing to provide testimony on behalf of Koinonia. Koinonia employs over 400 Direct Service Professionals who provide care and services to our individuals served. These DSPS are the core of our agency and ensure these individuals with disabilities can have a good, quality life, achieve and be included in our society just like the rest of us.

I now wish 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. These DSPs often are live at the poverty level and any increase in wages will help them have a better quality of life and will help them be able to continue to be devoted to serving people with disabilities. 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 and retain quality care givers.



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. 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 can continue to provide quality services to those who have such a great need.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julie Wagner, Chief People Officer  
Koinonia Homes Inc.