Ohio Senate

Finance Committee

May 24, 2019

Chairperson Dolan and Esteemed Senate Finance Committee Members,

I am Dan Sechkar and I am writing to provide testimony on behalf of The Sech-Kar Co. where I serve as the Administrator. The Sech-Kar Co. provides residential and other services in Southeast Ohio to people who have developmental disabilities. We have been in existence for over 30 years and currently provide different services to over 100 people. We also have about 140 employees with 125 or so being Direct Support Professionals. We provide services in Athens, Hocking, Morgan, and Perry Counties.

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.

The biggest problem we face in providing services to people is our difficulty in attracting good staff. It would help us greatly if we could increase the wages paid to our DSPs. If we were able to hire more DSPs, we could cut down substantially on our overtime. We are fortunate to have a great group of DSPs willing to work voluntary overtime, but I’m sure they would be happier spending less time at work and more time with their families. Hiring more DSPs would enable us to provide services to more Individuals with developmental disabilities. As things now stand, we reluctantly decline to provide services to new people because of our inability to attract enough employees. Increasing the wage we pay DSPs will go a long way to alleviating our DSP shortage. 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. 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,

Dan Sechkar, Administrator

The Sech-Kar Co.