

## Choices in Community Living

Ohio Senate  
Finance Committee  
May 24 2019

Chairperson Dolan and Esteemed Senate Finance Committee Members,

I am **William F Kramer** and writing to provide testimony on behalf of **Choices in Community Living** where I serve as the Treasurer of the board. "Choices" has about 40 group homes serving 4 clients in each house. We have a 24/7 operation and provide day hab. We provide services in 5 counties in the Dayton Ohio area.

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 workers are basically paid minimum wage, + a little, and many of them have to apply for food stamps etc. It is very difficult to live on and provide for a family at the wages we're able to pay. Our employees need to be qualified to take care of our client base and most have a lot of compassion for our clients and enjoy the work but have a problem with their own lives with low pay. We and they are forced to use a lot of overtime to get by because it is so difficult to hire people at the wage we can afford. Some leave the job to go work for fast food restaurants so they can make more money. 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,

**William F Kramer** Choices in Community Living