



Testimony on H.B. 408

House Criminal Justice Committee

Chairman LaRe, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Leland, and Esteemed Committee Members,

I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to offer this testimony on House Bill 408!

My name is Laura LaGodney and I am the CEO of Ability Works, and we are based in Sandusky, Ohio and serve in Erie, Huron, Ottawa, Sandusky, Lorain, and Lucas Counties. We are non-for-profit that provides supports for 275 Ohioans with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). As part of our array of services, we offer transportation services that allow 40 Ohioans with I/DD to get to places like work, volunteer and recreational opportunities, and medical appointments. Over the past few years, our fleet of vehicles had two catalytic converters stolen. These thefts have negatively impacted our ability to provide vital services to Ohioans with I/DD, so Ability Works offers our support to H.B. 408.

Ability Works has been providing services to adults with disabilities for over 48 years. Having reliable transportation is especially important to those with autism, anxiety, and PTSD. The major disruption has forced us to combine routes during a spike of COVID-19 cases and cancel community trips for the additional forty-five people in our activities program when our catalytic converters were stolen. We have seven transit vehicle, five routes and two dedicated vehicles that operate daily trips into our community. We know that bus transit vehicles do make it easier for criminals to steal the converters because they sit higher off the ground. The monetary impact to our organization for just the two converters was over \$4,400.00. The theft amount has been submitted to our insurance company, and we are hopeful that this claim does not impact our premiums. Please close the loopholes that require dealers to prove ownership of every single catalytic converter they purchase.

The passage of H.B. 408 further disincentives the theft of our catalytic converters and ensures that we can continue providing our vital services without disruption. **Thank you again, for the opportunity and to bring my concerns before you and if I can ever be of any help in this process, please let me know.**

Regards,

Laura LaGodney, CEO

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