



Testimony on HB 2  
Erich Bittner, Director of Government Relations  
Ohio Association of County Boards of DD  
2/9/21

Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Crawley, and members of the House Finance Committee;

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 2 on behalf of the Ohio Association of County Boards of Developmental Disabilities. Ohio's 88 county boards of DD serve almost 100,000 Ohioans with disabilities. Broadband internet access is very important to people with developmental disabilities, both as a means of receiving certain home- and community-based services and, as we have seen increasingly during this pandemic, as a way of accessing and being included in the community.

Incidence of developmental disabilities do not vary significantly based on geography. This means that throughout Ohio's rural communities, there are people with developmental disabilities whose options for receiving necessary services are limited by the internet service options where they live. High-speed internet can enable services like remote visits and assistive technology, telehealth and telepsychiatry, virtual job training, and school attendance. Improving access to broadband internet options in underserved areas of the state will mean these essential services will be available to many people who currently struggle to access them reliably through alternative means, such as through a cell phone provider. For this reason, OACB encourages a favorable vote on Senate Bill 8.

Thank you again for the opportunity to offer this support for the bill. I am available to answer any questions about this testimony at your convenience.