



Testimony on HB 110
House Finance Committee

Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Crawley, and Esteemed Committee Members,

I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify before you today.

My name is Bob Gaston, and I am the CEO of ARC Industries, Inc. We are located in Columbus and are serving individuals throughout Central Ohio. We are a nonprofit organization that provides supports for 1800 Ohioans with intellectual and developmental disabilities and we employ 245 full-time staff members.

I am very supportive of the budget initiatives outlined by Governor DeWine, Director Davis for the Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), and Director Miller for Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD). With these budget initiatives and the leadership of Director Davis and Director Miller, Ohioans with developmental and intellectual disabilities will continue to receive the vital services that organizations like mine provide.

ARC Industries has in partnership with the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities provided services for over 55-years. We successfully transitioned all adult day services, vocational habilitation, community employment services and non-medical transportation services from the county board in 2019 to ARC Industries. As a private provider, we have come to appreciate the tremendous challenges associated with recruiting and retaining staff, particularly Direct Support Professionals (DSP's). The current reimbursement rates for services do not support livable wages and the job market in Central Ohio has become extremely competitive. Our DSP's are the heart and soul of our agency. Our legacy of providing high quality services is contingent upon our ability to attract and maintain outstanding staff.

To best support these services and the Ohioans who receive and provide them, I encourage you to add the following initiatives into Ohio's biennium budget:

- Increase general revenue fund appropriations in DODD's budget to fund much needed Homemaker and Personal Care, Day and Vocational Services and Nonmedical Transportation Medicaid home and community-based waiver services rate increase. *These increases will provide much needed funds for Direct Support Professional (DSP) wages, support for other front-line professionals and sustain the infrastructure necessary to provide our services.*
- Increase general revenue fund appropriations in DODD's budget to support the reimbursement formula for intermediate care facilities (ICF).
- Support a budget amendment that would allow ICFs to choose between a reimbursement rate freeze or a continuation of the formula for the first year of the biennium.
- Support the creation of a Task Force to address our system's workforce challenges. *This Task Force will identify several initiatives and projects designed to help providers recruit and retain a qualified workforce.*

- Support the as introduced budget for Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities.

With your leadership, together we can ensure these services are available to the Ohioans that so greatly need them! Thank you again, for the opportunity and privilege to bring my concerns before you and if I can ever be of any help in this process, please let me know.

Sincerely,



Bob Gaston, CEO
ARC Industries, Inc.
2780 Airport Drive
Suite #450
Columbus, Ohio 43219
(614) 479-2500
bob.gaston@arcind.com

