



INDEPENDENCE

OF PORTAGE COUNTY

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Testimony on HB 110 House Finance Committee

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

My name is Cora Denning and I am the Staff Development Coordinator of Independence of Portage County, and we are located in Portage County. We are a not for profit business that provides supports for 100 Ohioans with intellectual and developmental disabilities and we employ 200 employees.

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.

Our services are unique because we provide opportunity for staff and individuals to grow. Not only do we help individuals learn to be more independent, but we also teach youth and young adults how to be a contributing member of society. We give them the chance to learn trades that they would not learn elsewhere. Additional investment would allow for more resources for our individuals and better opportunities for our staff to enhance their economic independence.

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

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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.**

Cora Denning
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WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: 3/9/2021

Name: Cora Denning

Are you representing: Yourself Organization

Organization (If Applicable): Independence of Portage County, Inc.

Position/Title: Staff Development Coordinator

Address: 575 E. Lake St

City: Ravenna State: Ohio Zip: 44266

Best Contact Telephone: 330-389-2266 Email: cdenning@iopci.org

Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes No

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): HB110

Specific Issue: Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities Budget

Are you testifying as a: Proponent Opponent Interested Party

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes No

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? Written Testimony Only

Please provide a brief statement on your position: My position includes an increase the general revenue fund in the DODD's budget. An increase in the ICF budget. Additioanlly, a reimbursement freeze of ICFs, a creation of a task force, and an overll budget enhansement for both individuals and staff.

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.