



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:

I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify before you today. My name is Julie Wells and I am the administer on call of Independence of Portage County. We are located at 575 E. Lake St, Ravenna OH 44266. We are a nonprofit that provides supports for 100 Ohioans with intellectual and developmental disabilities and we employ 200.

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.

We provide many services to adults and youths with developmental disabilities. Some services include, but not limited to, cooking, cleaning, bathing, and most importantly being there to work through any struggles they are facing throughout the day. We are there to help them learn everyday living skills as well as coping skills. We are someone's voice when they can't speak and need to say something out in the community and help find positive outlets in dealing with their stress.

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 and 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.**

Julie Wells
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www.indport2.org

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: 3/1/2021

Name: Julie Wells

Are you representing: Yourself Organization

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

Position/Title: Administrator On Call

Address: 575 East Main Street

City: Ravenna State: OH Zip: 44266

Best Contact Telephone: 3302962851 Email: AOC@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: I am in the homes and work with the staff and individuals on a daily bases.

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.