



Testimony on HB 110
House Finance Health and Human Services Sub-Committee

Chairman Roemer, Ranking Member West, and esteemed committee members,

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

My name is Liz Owens and I am the Chief Executive Officer of The Alpha Group, and we are located in Delaware and provide services in thirteen counties across Ohio. We are a not for profit business that provides supports for over 700 Ohioans with intellectual and developmental disabilities and we employ 120 agency employees.

I am 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 organization just celebrated our 50th anniversary and completed our privatization in 2012. I believe that at The Alpha Group, we think beyond traditional services to be innovative. We provide a wide array of DODD services through the various waivers, which includes: integrated adult day, vocational skill building, group and individual employment supports, transportation for facility programs and community employment, and Homemaker Personal Care. We are participating in the new transportation pilot that Director Davis spoke about. In addition, we provide services through OOD to include job placement, job coaching, retention services, summer youth programs and two Project Search programs. Our organization has also commenced working in partnership with our local school systems to assist with transition youth training both in the classroom and in the community. The additional investments will continue to support our frontline employees so we can continue to be innovative in providing services to those who need us.

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).

Helping People with ABILITIES Succeed.

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THE **ALPHA**GROUP

- 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.

Sincerely,

Liz Owens

Liz Owens, CEO

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