

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY OUTLINE

Senator Matt Dolan of the Senate Finance Committee, Chair

Senator Teresa Gavarone, Vice-Chair Senate Finance Committee

Ranking Minority Member Senator Vernon Sykes

Regarding Proposed Amendment to House Bill 110

Opposition of Amendment to House Bill 110, Protection and Advocacy Transparency Amendment

Erin Fearn,

May 13, 2021

Chairman Dolan, Vice Chairwoman Gavarone, Ranking Minority Member Sykes, and members of the Finance Committee, Thank you for the opportunity to provide strong opposition to the Amendment to House Bill 110, The Protection and Advocacy Transparency Amendment.

My name is Erin Fearn I am 14 years old and I have spent the past several years advocating for myself and others in my community. That is why I am here today to express my Opposition to the proposed amendment to House Bill 110, Protection and Advocacy Transparency Amendment. **The proposed amendment to the bill that would significantly impact the work and independence of DRO.**

As an advocate for those in my community and everywhere , I have to say no to this amendment and that is why I am here today to express my concerns. *DRO helps elevate the voice of self-advocates and gives individuals and organizations a resource they need to be effective in their advocacy. They have helped me fight for my rights as a person with disabilities, and have given me a say so in my own life. Without the help of DRO many Ohioans would lose their voice, and control over their own lives.*

*Disability Rights Ohio is an independent organization designated by the governor, and authorized by the federal government as the Protection and Advocacy system and Client Assistance Program in Ohio to investigate instances of abuse and neglect and to protect the rights of people with disabilities. Disability Rights Ohio has been an invaluable organization fighting for my rights and those across Ohio. People with*

*disabilities deserve an independent voice to uphold laws and fight against discrimination without retaliation. No other legal or advocacy organizations in the state have this type of oversight and for good reason. This amendment will prevent DRO from representing the people it serves.*

*I urge you to support people with disabilities and ask you to oppose this damaging amendment from being included in the state budget. The state budget is no place to address this issue.*

*I want to thank you again for the opportunity to provide opponent/interested party testimony as I value the chance to weigh in on policy that would greatly impact the health and wellbeing of Ohioans like me with disabilities. I would welcome the chance to repeat any part of my testimony for clarity, and would be happy to answer any questions that you may have at this time.*

*Thank you,*