



Ohio Senate Health Committee
Testimony on HB 110

Robert Heinzerling
Executive Director
Heinzerling Community

March 29, 2021

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Health Committee:

My name is Robert Heinzerling, and I am the Executive Director of Heinzerling Community. We have been proudly serving central Ohio's most medically fragile and disabled citizens since 1959. Heinzerling is located on the west side of Columbus and is the only developmental disability organization in Franklin County that provides around the clock residential services for this population.

Today, approximately 350 dedicated staff members work together to provide a loving home environment and intensive care to more than 170 children and adults with severe or profound developmental disabilities. The Heinzerling Community is an Intermediate Care Facility (ICF), that is regulated by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities.

I would like to focus my testimony on two subjects – first, the effect that COVID-19 has had on our staffing and second, the dire need to fully fund the ICF funding formula through the Medicaid reimbursement rate formula.

The work that our staff performs on a normal day is extremely challenging, which only became more difficult during COVID-19. Moreover, Heinzerling Community had significant challenges filling open positions before the pandemic began, and as you can imagine, those were only exacerbated by the onset of COVID-19. Our staff have been heroic during this entire pandemic and I cannot begin to thank them enough for their dedication and hard work. That being said, this pandemic has highlighted the importance of staff retention and the need to adequately compensate our staff for their work. This is an issue that needs to be addressed systemwide and we look forward to working with this body to solve this issue.

As you previously heard from Director Davis, ICFs are funded by a formula contained in the Revised Code based upon cost reports. This formula was the product of years of work by stakeholders and allows Heinzerling Community to provide essential services to 170 residents in our care. In order to continue the level of care that we provide for Ohio's most vulnerable citizens, we would respectfully request that ICFs be fully funded. Society is often judged by how it takes care of its most vulnerable citizens and this increase will show everyone that Ohio is committed to a high level of care for this population.

In closing, I would like to thank Director Davis for all of his support as well as that of his amazing staff at the Department of Developmental Disabilities. We all provide important services for Ohio's most vulnerable population and are forever grateful for the support we receive from the Ohio General Assembly. We look forward to working together to improve the lives of developmentally disabled citizens in the State of Ohio.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Heinzerling". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Robert Heinzerling
Executive Director
Heinzerling Community