



koinonia

Chairman Edwards, Vice Chair LaRe, Ranking Member Sweeney, and esteemed committee members,

My name is Anna Eimer, LPN and I am the Waiver Services Nurse of Koinonia Homes, and we are located in Independence, Ohio. We are an organization that provides assistance with all aspects of daily living and health care coordination to over 100 Ohioans living in their homes throughout our community through the home and community-based waiver program administered by the Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD).

I am very supportive of the budget initiatives outlined by Governor DeWine and Director Hauck for DODD and the budget initiatives outlined by Governor DeWine and Director Miller for Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD). The changing labor landscape and accompanying shortage of workers, including direct support professionals (DSP), threatens our ability to provide the critical supports on which our the people we serve and their families rely. The budget proposed in HB 33 is a good foundation to help our system combat these many changes.

Nursing coordination of care and nursing resources for on-going staff training are only two of the immensely important roles that nurses play in supporting the best lives of our waiver receiving individuals. Nursing for Waiver programs for adults with IDD is not funded in an understandable, realistic fashion – so much so, that most providers choose not to even attempt to get waiver nursing reimbursement because of how complicated it is.

Due to the on-going staffing crisis and the levels of staff turnover, assistance with coordination of care for the individuals by a nurse is more important than ever. More funding is needed to hire competent DSPs and nurses at living wages to continue caring for our individuals with complex medical needs as they continue to age in place in their homes in our community.

The Governor's proposed budget initiatives, guided by the leadership of Director Hauck and Miller, is a great foundation to reinforce and rebuild the services provided by your agency. With these budget initiatives, Ohioans with disabilities will continue to receive the vital employment services organizations like mine provide. We encourage this committee to approve the Governor's budget proposal for DODD (and ODD if you provide OOD services) and to invest additional dollars through budget amendment HC0656 into these vital services to raise direct support professional wages to at least an average of \$20 an hour.

With your leadership, together we can ensure these services are available to the Ohioans that so greatly need them! Thank you for the opportunity and privilege to bring my concerns before you today.

Anna Eimer, LPN
anna.eimer@koinoniahomes.org
4689 Morningside Drive
Cleveland, OH 44109
419-575-0005

Creating Opportunities, Enriching Lives

6161 Oak Tree Blvd. , Suite 400 | Independence, Ohio 44131 | Koinoniahomes.org
Phone (216) 588-8777 | Fax (216) 588-5670