

Northern Ohioans for Budget Legislation and Equality (NOBLE)

Platform for State Budget Subcommittee hearing testimony

3/22/2023

Good morning to all Subcommittee members. My name is Delores Gray from Cleveland, Ohio, thank you, for this time to express the importance of developing and passing Budget legislation that should be centered around the ARPA funds.

I am a grieving mother, a grandmother of two young men, nine and twelve, and a community wellness activist, with that said, I have major concerns about the health and wellness of my family, my community, and my city Cleveland. My community needs to be strengthened in order to support more demands. Expand funding for services that are needed for children and their families dealing with disabilities, such as learning disabilities, developmental and other medical disorders. We must bridge the gap by increasing funding that will provide better services for all counties.

The pandemic brought about many problems, that has caused a bigger crack in our city infrastructures. Small businesses closed, along with less resources that help mothers and care givers work, such as childcare programs, food assistance programs, elderly care, residents losing their homes, along with increased behavioral problems and mental health issues, where there are more patients than providers. I know from my own journey, of losing a daughter right before the pandemic and becoming a caregiver, it has been very hard managing life. Ohio must improve quality and expand access to all programs and services that support families, children and our elderly. In order for Cleveland and our surrounding poor counties to thrive, increasing funding must happen, we must have fair equity, this legislation is needed. Thank you again for your time. I yield my time.