



Written Testimony on HB 344
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Ohio Association of County Boards of DD
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Chairman Roemer, Vice Chair Lorenz, Ranking Member Troy, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, on behalf of the Ohio Association of County Boards of Developmental Disabilities, thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 344.

Ohio's 88 county boards of DD support more than 105,000 people with developmental disabilities—and their family members—by funding, overseeing, and sometimes directly providing a lifetime of services that are essential to an individual's daily living needs, often from the time a person is born until the time they pass away.

When the county board is the funder of DD services, either at 100% or matched with federal funds through the state-federal Medicaid partnership, these funds are raised by asking voters to approve renewal, replacement, and continuing property tax levies.

County board of DD levies have been resoundingly approved by voters over the years because they have demonstrated they are a trusted, responsible steward of local tax dollars. In fact, since 2005, county boards of DD have proposed a total of 68 replacement levies in some capacity. Of these, 63 (or 93%) have passed, including a replacement levy from Summit County that passed just last year.

County boards engage in extensive education campaigns so that voters understand the issue that is on the ballot and the implications it will have on their tax bill. They also are careful to inform voters of how these funds are used, which leads to their overwhelming approval.

Indeed, election data from the past two decades paints a compelling picture that Ohio voters understand what is being asked of them on Election Day—and they have voted accordingly. All county boards provide services in line with the expectations (and funding limitations) put in place by their local communities, and we trust voters to determine the best way these services should be funded.

OACB is currently in the process of scheduling a meeting with the sponsor(s) to discuss this bill further, and as such, our written testimony today will be brief. However, we have significant concerns about the future of developmental disability services if county boards lose the option to replace their current levy amounts should HB 344 be enacted as drafted. For this reason, we are opposed to HB 344 in its current form and will seek to address these concerns with the sponsor(s) at their earliest convenience.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to provide testimony today.