

Chair Dolin, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Sykes, and members Senate Finance Committee:

One Hundred Twenty Five Thousand families are raising a child with a life-threatening medical condition across the State of Ohio, according to Nationwide Children's Hospital. Imagine raising a child with cancer, diabetes, cystic fibrosis, or another life-threatening condition. Families in this situation face numerous challenges everyday: how are we going to keep our household budget, how are we going to provide a happy childhood for all of our kids, and most importantly, how am I going to keep my child well or maybe even alive? Will my child ever just feel like a kid again?

That's where A Kid Again steps to the plate. A Kid Again provides monthly Adventures for children with life-threatening medical conditions across the State of Ohio- providing families an opportunity to allow their child with a medical condition to experience joy while also allowing the entire family unit to come together for quality time once every single month. To date, A Kid Again has more than 20,000 Ohioans enrolled in all 88 counties.

I would like to tell you a story about Hannah. Due to her medical condition, Hannah was born with one lung. This condition has created massive obstacles and challenges for Hannah and her family. During her seven years of life, Hannah has spent over six months in the hospital. These are six months where Hannah wasn't surrounded by her family or loved ones. These are six months where Hannah's mom, Meredith, was separated from her son's. Can you imagine how difficult it was for those boys to have had six months of their lives without their mom or sister at home. Imagine how scary it is to see an ambulance pull up to your house to whisk your little sister away to Nationwide Children's Hospital. This is why A Kid Again is imperative for our families. A study conducted by Nationwide Children's Hospital concluded that 77% of A Kid Again families are more connected as a family unit because of our monthly programming. Another, study conducted by the American Academy of Pediatrics concluded that 80% of parents raising children with life-threatening medical conditions see their marriage end in divorce. A Kid Again keeps families together and wraps them in support when they need it most.

We would like to thank Senator Kunze for drafting an amendment to include A Kid Again in the State Budget for \$100,000 per fiscal year. Here's how that funding will support A Kid Again families, like Hannah's. We will bring Adventures closer to home for the families we serve in hard to reach parts of the state, allowing us to provide a better and more holistic experience for all our families- regardless of their zip code. It's important to note, because we serve more than 300 conditions and not all of those conditions have a non-profit to support them. That's why this investment is so important to ensure we can serve more families in need of our services.

At A Kid Again, 91 cents of every dollar we receive is reinvested back into local economies across Ohio.

A Kid Again supports families raising children with life-threatening medical conditions and promotes that great State of Ohio.

Chair Dolin, thank you for the privilege of speaking to the subcommittee today. We would greatly appreciate the support of all Senate Finance Committee members on this amendment.