

**Interested Party Testimony for Sub. HB 33
Ohio Senate Finance Committee
Andrew DeFratis, *Director of Public Affairs*
Cleveland Rape Crisis Center
June 8, 2023**

Chair Dolan, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide interested party testimony on Substitute House Bill 33. My name is Andrew DeFratis and I am the Director of Public Affairs with Cleveland Rape Crisis Center (CRCC).

CRCC provides direct services to more than 10,000 survivors of rape, sexual abuse, and human trafficking each year across Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, and Ashtabula counties. Tens of thousands are engaged annually through outreach, abuse prevention, and training activities, while countless more are reached in the state and the nation by programs CRCC has impacted through innovative thought-leadership over our fifty-year battle to eliminate sexual violence.

The Trafficking in Persons Study Commission found that more than 1,800 children in Ohio, ages 12-17, will be trafficked annually. CRCC is unique from other rape crisis centers in the state, in having adapted to meet this need by opening our Anti-Human Trafficking Drop-In Center in 2021. Our Drop-In Center serves as a model for others, providing direct access to comprehensive services, including individual counseling, case management, assistance to survivors considering legal options or navigating the criminal justice process, and support groups. Additional on-site programs address basic needs and support self-sufficiency.

During the last operating budget, we received \$300,000 each fiscal year through the Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) to provide targeted prevention services for youth coming out of detention. Our ongoing memorandum of understanding with DYS has grown in impact to include professional trainings, best-practice toolkits supporting programming across the state, and continued work to build on our referral partnership – connecting survivors to services. This work is not currently funded in the Senate substitute version of HB 33.

We are asking for your support of an amendment to continue providing \$300,000 each fiscal year to build on the successful foundation our DYS partnership has started and to continue the work necessary to prevent Ohio children from being victims of human trafficking and maintaining essential services. These funds are vital to our ability to continue providing these services, as the largest portion of flagship funding, a federal grant, will phase out in December.



Clark-Fulton Office
2937 West 25th Street, 2nd Floor
Cleveland, OH 44113

(216) 619-6194 Main
(216) 619-6192 24/7 Hotline
clevelandrapecrisis.org

Without this funding, our programming faces a deficit. For context, losing this funding would follow our having adapted our overall services to substantial federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) cuts each year since 2018, when we received a \$4 million allocation, cut to \$3 million in 2019, and slashed to \$1 million in 2020, where it has hovered since.

I appreciate this opportunity to advocate for our services and our survivors. I would be happy to accept questions today or by email at andrewd@clevelandrcc.org.



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