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**Teresa Lampl, LISW-S**  
**Senate Finance Committee**  
**Written Testimony on Am. Sub. HB 33 (SFY 2024-25 Operating Budget)**  
**June 8, 2023**

Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in reaction to the Senate’s Am. Sub House Bill 33, the operating budget for state fiscal years 2024-2025. The Ohio Council appreciates the Senate’s deliberate and thoughtful examination of Am. Sub. HB 33 and we applaud the continued support of Ohio’s community behavioral health system of care. While additional resources are needed to develop, strengthen, and sustain a full continuum of care for Ohioans in need of services, the Senate’s substitute budget bill is a step in the right direction.

With respect to the forthcoming omnibus amendment to Am. Sub. HB 33, we encourage this committee and Senate leadership to address the following outstanding policy and budget issues that we have prioritized as areas for improvement.

Issue 1 – Medicaid Behavioral Health Rate Increases (Amendment SC 2632)

The Ohio Council supports the Department of Medicaid’s budget proposal and is very appreciative of the proposed historic investments in the community behavioral health system. However, salaries in behavioral health care positions are well below those for similar positions. In fact, data shows our system requires a 20% increase in Medicaid rates to keep up with inflationary costs and to recruit and retain a sufficient workforce. **In short, more investment is needed to sustain, attract, and retain the workforce in today’s labor market.**

Accordingly, **we respectfully ask you to support Amendment SC2632**, which invests \$143 Million (all funds) in Medicaid community behavioral health services rates to stabilize and strengthen the behavioral health workforce.

Issue 2 – Certification and Accreditation of Mental Health and Addiction Services (MHACD4)

The Ohio Council strongly supports the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services’ (OhioMHAS) budget initiative to promote and enhance quality and safety standards amongst the behavioral health providers operating throughout Ohio. The proposed changes (described in the comp doc MHACD4) will promote increased quality through the adoption of national accreditation standards for OhioMHAS certified mental health and substance use services, as well as require provider organizations to be in good standing in Ohio and other states where such organizations operate. The safety and care of Ohio patients requires further safeguards and quality standards. The Ohio Council urges the Senate to restore the language proposed by the administration and agreed to by the House in Am. Sub. HB 33. Accordingly, please restore the language in MHACD4.

### Issue 3 – Monitoring and Funding of Recovery Housing Residences (MHACD9 & MHACD11)

The Ohio Council urges the Senate to restore the language addressing the monitoring and certification of recovery housing residences. **We urge the Seante to restore the provisions set forth in the comp doc section MHACD9.** This OhioMHAS proposal would bolster quality by applying national accreditation standards to recovery housing, create a statewide registry of accredited recovery housing, and establish a process for reviewing quality concerns. Additionally, the Ohio Council urges restoration of the funding and distribution model to support additional quality recovery housing residences throughout Ohio. **Please restore the provisions set forth in comp doc MHACD11 and at section 337.90** of Am. Sub. HB 33.

### Issue 4 – OhioMHAS Budget Line-Items

The Ohio Council appreciates the efforts of the Ohio Senate as it underwent the process of examining, deliberating, and amending Am. Sub. HB 33. We applaud the resources directed toward Ohio’s behavioral health system of care and for maintaining several key programs to help individuals in need of mental health and addiction treatment services. However, during the budget process, funding for several of Governor DeWine’s key initiatives have been reduced below the executive proposal. Accordingly, **we respectfully ask the Ohio Senate to restore the following OhioMHAS line-items to the Governor’s as-introduced levels.** The investment in state hospital capacity, healthy kids, parents, and workers is an essential investment so we can fill new jobs and take advantage of opportunities to grow Ohio’s economy.

#### **OhioMHAS line-items to be restored to H.B. 33, As-Introduced levels:**

- **Line item 336-412 Hospital Services:** Ohio’s state psychiatric hospitals are experiencing increasing costs associated with inflation, payroll, and lower commercial insurance reimbursement. Please restore the as-introduced funding levels to support operations of Ohio’s six regional hospitals and allow for the planned expansion of 80 additional beds.
- **Line item 336-406 Prevention and Wellness:** The investment in prevention and early intervention services promotes wellness and reduces or delays the impact and onset of mental illness and substance use.
- **Line Item 336-422 Criminal Justice Services:** These resources support mental health and addiction treatment in Ohio’s jails and prisons and expand local community forensic services.
- **Line item 336-421 Continuum of Care:** These resources allow ADAMH Boards to sustain funding at existing community levels and cover the costs of dedicated funding initiatives.

### Conclusion

The Ohio Council looks forward to working with the Ohio Senate, the Ohio House, and the DeWine Administration for the remainder of the budget process to advance sound policies, allocate resources to enhance community behavioral health providers, and most importantly help Ohioans seeking mental health and substance use disorder services achieve health, wellness, and recovery.