

**Testimony on HB33 before Senate Health Committee**

**May 10, 2023**

**Angelique Cunningham**

**Chairman Huffman, Vice Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Health Committee, my name is Angelique Cunningham. I am here today with NOBLE to discuss Kinship Care. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.**

**My daughter who has experienced a lot in life experienced a mental health break which ended in her four children all under the age of 10 being placed into my care for the time being, maybe permanently. Cuyahoga County placed the children in my care about a month ago and at the time I was given a \$150 gift card, which I used for groceries. I was recently assigned a caseworker who I will be working with to apply for more assistance. However, other than the \$150 gift card, I have used my own personal funds, taken out of my only source of income, my disability check, to take care of the kids.**

**I ask you today to do more for Kinship Caregivers. I would like to see more assistance for grandparents and relatives who open their homes to the children that need them. This assistance should be provided abundantly from the second the children are placed in their care.**

**Additionally, I ask that you restore funding for the Kinship Caregiver Program. The Kinship Caregiver Program has been funded at \$10 million, per year. The program provides one-time stabilization expenses, such as cribs or beds for children and short-term reimbursement for childcare for kinship caregivers.**

**Thank you for the opportunity.**