

Alyssa Perna  
Testimony on HB 33  
Supporting the DD Workforce

Hello, my name is Alyssa and I have a sibling, my brother Adam, who is 42 and has down syndrome. I sit on the Family Advisory Council for the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities and have been a DD advocate forever. My 70 year-old parents have been selflessly providing care for Adam for 42+ years of his life and it is not easy. They do NOT get a break unless I give them one. And they are not alone. They are exhausted and often neglect their own needs as aging individuals due to prioritizing caregiving for my brother. My brother plays on a bowling league with friends who have developmental disabilities with a group called Friends Forever in the Greater Cleveland area. Beyond my brothers circumstances, I know that many individuals are suffering. Many of the older bowlers who have developmental disabilities have aging parents who can no longer care give for them. What will happen to these individuals without their family support? What will happen to these individuals if there are no empathetic, compassionate direct service providers to support them? We need to do everything we can to ensure the health (mental and physical) well being for those in our community who have developmental disabilities. We need to stand up and speak for those who do not have a voice. I would love to help in whatever way that I can.