

Erin Forson
Testimony on HB 33
Supporting the DD Workforce

My son has a Level One Waiver. He requires less care than those with more medical or higher cognitive disabilities, but he does need supports. I provide as much natural support as I can, but I work, and his dad travels for work. It has been difficult to find a Level One provider, even if we stretch his Level One budget and ask for 10 hours a week. Providers are so short staffed that they are only willing to take cases with 12-16 hours shifts. The reason? They drive from Columbus and don't want shorter shifts due to the low pay, cost of gas, and wear and tear on the vehicle. Day programs have closed during our Pandemic, and while my son works, he would benefit from a social group that will support him and help him grow his interpersonal skills. Sadly, he is very isolated from the community (even though he lives in it) due to lack of available (and willing) services.