

Jennifer Rosner
Testimony on HB 33
Supporting the DD Workforce

Our oldest son, Noah, has severe developmental disabilities. We moved to Cuyahoga County about 10 years ago because the services in NJ were nowhere near what we needed them to be for Noah. We found happiness and help in Ohio. We have been blessed to be eligible for the resources that Ohio and Cuyahoga County provide for our son. Unfortunately, if those services disappear because there are simply not enough workers to make them happen, then Noah and our family will suffer tremendously. Noah is happy when he can help. He is happy when he is spending time like a typical teenager/adult. He needs help to make that happen and he deserves a happy fulfilling life like everyone else on the planet. The employees that work with Ohio's developmental disabilities programs are angels, they are selfless, frontline, heroes. Truly. What they do every day is not easy and it is not glamorous but they show up with smiles and make the people that have these developmental disabilities feel like they are heard, seen, and important. They give them the help they need so they can live fulfilling lives and feel fulfilled while contributing to the community. Simply put, they bring true joy and happiness to these individuals and their families in a way that cannot be measured. They deserve so much more than we are giving them in respect, acknowledgement, and thanks. The least we can do is pay them what they deserve. Pay them a fair and respectable rate so that they can support themselves and their families and to show them we as a state recognize the specific and skilled nature of their job. Not everyone can do it. They are special people who deserve to be paid for their unique and critical contribution.