

Joanne Bailis  
Testimony on HB 33  
Supporting the DD Workforce

Friends of mine have struggled for decades with an adopted special needs son. His adoptive mother stepped away from a promising career to stay home to work with him and provide the best possible life for him. Now they have learned that the group home setting where he has been living is likely to close due to lack of staff because of the subsidy for paying the workers has not been raised by the Ohio Legislature. They cannot compete for competent workers with other low wage jobs because residential care is more difficult than slinging burgers. My friends face the probability of their adult son moving back home at a time when they are approaching 80 years of age and the mother is in such fragile health that a potential violent outburst by their son could kill her. Please consider also that the alternative--putting the inhumanity of placing special needs adults on the street. I urge you to realize the damage that can and will be done to the adults and their families as well as the citizens of Ohio when it is determined that this was unwise and expensive rehabilitative dollars will need to be spent to undue what is likely to be a terrible mistake. Please decide to increase reimbursement rates to our hard working service providers and provide peace to the families who through no fault of their own have special need individuals in their lives. Thank you.