

John Manning
Testimony on HB 33
Supporting the DD Workforce

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I'm a board member at UCP of Greater Cleveland, and the father of a child with multiple complex disabilities.

UCP is unable to pay critical direct care workers living wages due to stagnant reimbursement rates from DODD (rates set in 2007, with one 4% increase in 2022). This causes acute labor shortages (an 80% turnover rate for DSPs in 2022) and impacts quality of care. The changing labor landscape and accompanying shortage of workers, especially direct support professionals (DSP), threaten UCP's ability to provide the critical supports on which the people we serve and their families rely.

I am very supportive of the budget initiatives outlined by Governor DeWine and Director Hauck for DODD.

The Governor's proposed budget for DODD is a great foundation to stabilize, reinforce and rebuild the services provided by UCP of Greater Cleveland.

I encourage the legislature to approve the Governor's budget proposal for DODD and to invest additional dollars into these vital services to raise direct support professional wages to at least an average of \$20.64 (vs. a current average of about \$13/hour), just like the current wages of DSPs working for state-operated developmental centers.

Unlike other businesses, we cannot raise our prices to support increased wages for our team members. Only the legislature can make this long-overdue investment that will help us recruit and retain the workforce needed to continue to provide our vital, high quality services for persons with developmental disabilities.

Without this investment, provider agencies will not be able to remain in business to provide these services.

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