

Julia Grigsby  
Testimony on HB 33  
Supporting the DD Workforce

Our autistic son turned 20 this week. We have one respite care sitter who also sits for 6-7 other families, and her availability is limited. We receive funding for respite care via SWOCOG (Greene County), a total of 43 hours PER YEAR (roughly 3 hours of respite per month). We are limited to specific activities as our son's disabilities, health and sensory issues impact our daily lives. We have to take him everywhere with us as he cannot be left home alone, and we are also limited as to where we can travel due to his serious sensory issues. We also cannot rely on extended family as they are either too far away and/or ill-equipped to assist us.

Twenty years ago before I had children, I was a case worker for a 90-bed facility for the adult DD population in another state. The facility would sometimes hire back previously fired staff due to the hardship in finding qualified individuals. I was also a CILA director, and keeping sufficient, trustworthy staff for all three shifts could be a nightmare. Both places were funded by Department of Human Services, with low wages to offer staff. This created most of the problems with finding and keeping good direct care staff. It is still a problem today, and it is especially a problem in Ohio.