

Karen Plymale  
Testimony on HB 33  
Supporting the DD Workforce

My name is Karen Plymale. I am writing to ask for your support in a permanent increase in Medicaid funding. This will enable agencies providing care so greatly needed for children & adults with developmental disabilities the ability to invest in increasing the pay of their dsp's. They will be able to attract, train properly, & retain qualified caring men & women to support & care for those so greatly in need.

I know how difficult and challenging yet rewarding their job can be. My daughter was born with severe mental and physical disabilities over 30 years ago. We had to make such a difficult realization that we were not able to give her the care she needed and deserved. She had such severe behavioral issues. She is nonverbal & cannot function at all on her own. We placed her at Rose-Mary Center in Euclid, Ohio & is currently thriving in one of their group homes. These providers CHOOSE to go to work every day giving my daughter & so many others the care they need & dignity they deserve. They provide loving care, friendship & support to help her reach her fullest potential. It took a long time to get my daughter where she is now but as a team, we did it. She is provided with a stable, skilled environment she needs that we were unable to provide alone in our home. As my body ages there is no way I can possibly give her the same level of care she currently is receiving at the group home. In addition to directly caring for our loved ones, they also have to run a household. So much care & love is being put into what so many of the direct care staff do and as a result strong bonds of trust and love are formed.

Agencies are in constant need to attract and retain qualified staff to provide the care my daughter and so many others deserve and absolutely cannot live without. Funding is crucial, without it we fail to provide to those who truly need and deserve help the most. Again, I am asking for your full support in a permanent increase in the Medicaid.