

Robert Bazzarelli
Testimony on HB 33
Supporting the DD Workforce

My name is Bob Bazzarelli and I am the family member and guardian for my cousin Debbie who is developmentally disabled. Debbie is the kindest and most loving person you would ever meet. Debbie brings joy and light wherever she goes. Debbie requires 24/7 supervision to help her with everything from bathing to meal preparation, to medication management. Up until COVID, Debbie led a full life with staff that knew her needs...provided compassionate care...and made her life full. Today, she still receives care...but unfortunately, half the staff who cares for her is a revolving door of people who never really get a chance to know her, understand her needs, her wants, her desires,...her being. Yet she trust these people with her life. There are good, kind and loving people who work with Debbie...but they leave the job after one, two or three months because unfortunately they are paid a little more than minimum wage and can earn more money with much less responsibility working in a store or restaurant. We need to provide a competitive wage to direct support staff who take care of the vulnerable in our society like my Debbie. We need YOU to be that voice to help them by voting for additional funding so that the wages paid to support staff can be competitive. Please don't give up on those in our society that are most vulnerable and need your support. Don't give up on Debbie. I stand up for Debbie. Can YOU stand up for Debbie too? Thank you.

Robert Bazzarelli
1901 Fairway Dr
Wickliffe, OH 44092-1177