

Shellie Leach
Testimony on HB 33
Supporting the DD Workforce

Hello,

My name is Shellie Leach, and I and the parent of a 31-year-old young woman who has developmental disabilities, autism, and a seizure disorder. We live in Southeast Ohio a very rural part of the State. I am writing you today to share our story. I work as a Parent Mentor for Wellston City Schools and have been in this position for 20+ years. I am submitting my testimony today because I am on the verge of losing my job, health insurance, and retirement due to the lack of staff to care for my daughter. The DSP Crisis is real. Our family is struggling to hold our lives together we work our jobs and care for her. I am having to miss work on a regular basis to help care- give for my daughter. She requires 24/7 care and often does not sleep which adds additional stress to me and her limited staff. There are many days that I go to work with 2 hours of sleep. This amount of caregiving is wearing on me both physically and mentally. I am a very independent person, who has always worked and contributed to my community. I hate admitting that my daughter's care is this difficult. Writing this is no easy thing, but my family needs help and you have the ability to help. I am sincerely asking that lawmakers take action to raise wages for workers in the DD system so that Ohio families like mine can get the supports we need to thrive.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony and for your careful consideration of how to resolve this critical issue.

Shellie Leach
Jackson, Ohio
740-418-9225