

Tom Rickels  
Testimony on HB 33  
Supporting the DD Workforce

Having been in the IDD field for 41 years and as the current co-owner of a day program X-Excel, the crisis is real. In 2022, we closed down one of our Day sites and set a strategy to serve as many people as we had staff for. It may seem like a strange move but is the only reality now. X-Excel has excellent retention with only 2 of our 11 staff being here less than 4 years. At the start of 2023 I lost a staff that had been with me for 12 years simply because she needed more money. She was Stark County DSP of the year and received an Impact Award from the Ohio Healthcare Association. The issue now is money. Our DSP's pass meds, do specialized diets and personal care. They deserve to be compensated.