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**Testimony on SFY 24/25 Operating Budget  
Senate Medicaid Committee**

**Chairman Romanchuk, Vice Chair Wilson, Ranking Member Ingram, and esteemed committee members,**

**My name is Beth Butler and I am the CEO of ventureLINX and we are located in Celina and Greenville, Ohio serving three Ohio counties, Mercer, Darke and Auglaize. ventureLINX Adult Day Services and Employment services through the home and community-based waiver program administered by the Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD). Our team of 34 employees are proud to provide essential services to 110 Ohioans with intellectual and developmental disabilities.**

**I am very supportive of the budget initiatives outlined by Governor DeWine and Director Hauck for DODD and very appreciative of the additional investments adopted by the House of Representatives in House Bill 33.**

ventureLINX provides services to over 140 men and women with disabilities. These individuals rely on more than 30 DSPs to provide assistance on the path to employment whether it be gaining skills to finding a job, employment supports, or being there as a support in life. DSPs are the backbone to long-term support for people with disabilities. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was already a documented DSP workforce crisis, with high turnover and vacancy rates. These issues have only gotten worse. We have had to discontinue critical Homemaker/Personal Care services to more than 100 people with disabilities due to lack of staff and are about to face the same issue again with our day services. People cannot afford to work here even though we average in the high end of hourly wages across the state. We must use funds from other sources to pay these rates because we are in the second lowest Medicaid funding range and those funds are running out.

House Bill 33 as passed by the House is a great foundation to reinforce and rebuild the services provided by ventureLINX. **We encourage this committee to support the House's version of H.B. 33 as it pertains to DODD appropriations. Further, we encourage the Senate to invest additional dollars into these vital services to raise direct support professional wages to at least an average of \$20.64. This investment will help us recruit and retain the workforce needed to continue to provide our quality services.**

With your leadership, together we can ensure these services are available to the Ohioans that so greatly need them! **Thank you again, for the opportunity and privilege to bring my concerns before you and if I can ever be of any help in this process, please let me know.**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Beth Butler".

Beth Butler, CEO  
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