

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

Chairman Romanchuk, Vice Chair Wilson, Ranking Member Ingram, and esteemed committee members, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony today.

My name is Kara McConnell, and currently work at Koinonia, a non-profit organization providing services to those with 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.

I have worked for Koinonia in an administrative role for over four years and have witnessed first-hand the shortages, the turnover, and the lack of funding for the people with IDD. Koinonia is 100% Medicaid funded, and we are tied to the rates which are outdated. Koinonia has had to raise its rates of pay beyond the rate of reimbursement we receive from Medicaid.

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 an average of \$20. This investment will help us recruit and retain the workforce needed to continue to provide our quality services.

Thank you, Chairman Romanchuk, Vice Chair Wilson, Ranking Member Ingram, and the esteemed committee members for allowing me to provide written testimony. Ohioans with Developmental Disabilities are hopeful for your support.

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