



**Interested Party Testimony on House Bill 33
Senate Medicaid Committee
May 4, 2023**

Chairman Romanchuk, Vice Chair Wilson, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Medicaid Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on House Bill 33, the main operating budget. My name is Mike Matoney, I am the Executive Director of New Directions which operates out of Cleveland, but today I come to you representing the Ohio Alliance of Recovery Providers (OARP).

OARP is a statewide organization made up of forty-three addiction treatment providers, certified by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, whose members work together as a system to help clients move from active addiction to productive citizenship. Our member organizations work to increase access to treatment and develop a recovery-oriented system of care for all Ohioans. Through our professional networking and idea sharing, we have created a collective knowledge of best practices for optimal care and share this information with state and national legislators. At the end of my testimony, you will see a map showing where our members operate throughout the state.

Today, I would like to touch of a few parts of HB 33 and let you know where our members stand.

PROPONENT – Ohio Chemical Dependency Professionals Board Requested Funding Increase:

OARP supports the Ohio Chemical Dependency Professionals Board’s request for increased funding in the amount of \$112,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$97,000 in fiscal year 2025. This will allow them to hire additional staff to ensure that the Board can provide consumer protection through the enforcement of ethical standards.

PROPONENT – Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services’ Budget:

OARP supports the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services’ (OhioMHAS) budget as it was introduced, and we are thankful for Director Lori Criss’ leadership through the last few years. The community behavioral health field has faced increased demand for services with increased staff turnover. This workforce crisis has been exacerbated by both the opioid epidemic (which has only intensified) and the COVID-19 pandemic. More than ever, Ohio needs a robust, reliable, and accessible behavioral health system. OARP has collaborated with OhioMHAS to create workforce development pathways such as scholarships, internships, paid credentialing, and paid apprenticeships to attract individuals to the behavioral health field, and we are grateful to you in the legislature for appropriating funds in HB 45 last year to help accomplish these goals.

As you may have already heard, OhioMHAS spent much of 2022 convening the Chapter 340 Review Stakeholder Workgroup which sought to identify code sections in need of review or modernization, define specific challenges, and explore recommended solutions through a transparent and public process. Chapter 340 is the section of the Ohio Revised Code addressing alcohol, drug addiction, and mental health services. We are proud of the collaboration between all the stakeholders who participated, and we hope you get a chance to read the final report. **But we do ask that the Legislature keep any changes to ORC Chapter 340 out of the budget so that there can be a public discussion for all interested parties.**

INTERESTED PARTY – Increase Medicaid Community Behavioral Health Services:

I want to be very clear – OARP supports Governor Mike DeWine and the Department of Medicaid for the historic investments included in this budget: \$220 million (a 10% increase) over the biennium for behavioral health services. They listened to providers and recognized how critically we need help. However, the reason I am here today is to tell you that more funding is necessary, and we very much need your help.

The House-passed version of HB 33 includes about \$77 million (all funds) or a 3.5% increase to the direct care payment rates section (333.29) for community behavioral health services, and this will be helpful for our non-credentialed employees. But please know that the behavioral health workforce is very diverse – we employ psychiatrists, nurses, counselors, social workers, case managers, residential staff, and peer supporters to name a few – and these are all credentialed professionals with bachelor’s and master’s degrees.

Without adequate funding, we cannot treat the number of Ohioans coming to us for services. Many residential treatment providers are operating at 50% to 75% capacity because they are unable to attract sufficient staff to expand care. The 10% increase proposed by the Governor in HB 33 for behavioral health services is nothing short of imperative, but it will only cover the inflationary increases that providers have seen the last few years. More is needed so we may increase salaries for our employees and compete with market-wide wage growth.

OARP respectfully requests your support to increase funding for Medicaid community behavioral health services (line item 651525) by an additional \$143 million (all funds) over the biennium.

Additional funds will bring the total amount up to a 20% increase for these vital services and it will incentivize more workers to pursue careers in the community behavioral health system, retain and invest in the staff we currently have, and most importantly, it will allow providers to care for all those who need our services.

Thank you for your time today and allowing me to speak on behalf of the Ohio Alliance of Recovery Providers. Again, please take a look at the next page to see where our members operate. I am happy to answer any questions you may have for me.

Where does OARP operate?

1. Addiction Services Council
2. Alvis
3. Catalyst Life Services
4. Center for Addiction Treatment
5. CommQuest Services
6. CHC Addiction Services
7. Compass Family and Community Services
8. CompDrug
9. Coshocton Behavioral Services
10. The Counseling Center Inc.
11. The Crossroads Center
12. Family Recovery Center
13. Family Recovery Services
14. First Step Home
15. Guernsey Health Choices
16. Health Recovery Services
17. Hitchcock Center for Women
18. House of Hope
19. Interval Brotherhood Home
20. Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers
21. The LCADA Way
22. McKinley Hall
23. Meridian HealthCare
24. Morgan Behavioral Health Choices
25. Muskingum Behavioral Health
26. Neil Kennedy Recovery Clinic
27. New Direction
28. The Nord Center
29. Ohio TASC Association
30. Oriana House
31. Perry Behavioral Health Choices Inc.
32. Pickaway Area Recovery Services Inc.
33. Pike County Recovery Council
34. The Prospect House
35. The Recovery Center
36. Recovery Resources
37. Recovery Services of NW Ohio
38. Recovery/Prevention Resources of Delaware & Morrow Counties
39. Sojourner Recovery Services
40. Stella Maris
41. Talbert House
42. Thrive Peer Recovery Services
43. Urban Ounce of Prevention Services

With forty-three providers, OARP operates over 200 facilities across the state. Services include assessment, sub-acute detox, medication assisted treatment, non-intensive and intensive outpatient, partial hospitalization and residential treatment, individual and family counseling, peer mentoring, drug screening, wellness and case management, prevention, gambling treatment, and recovery housing.

