

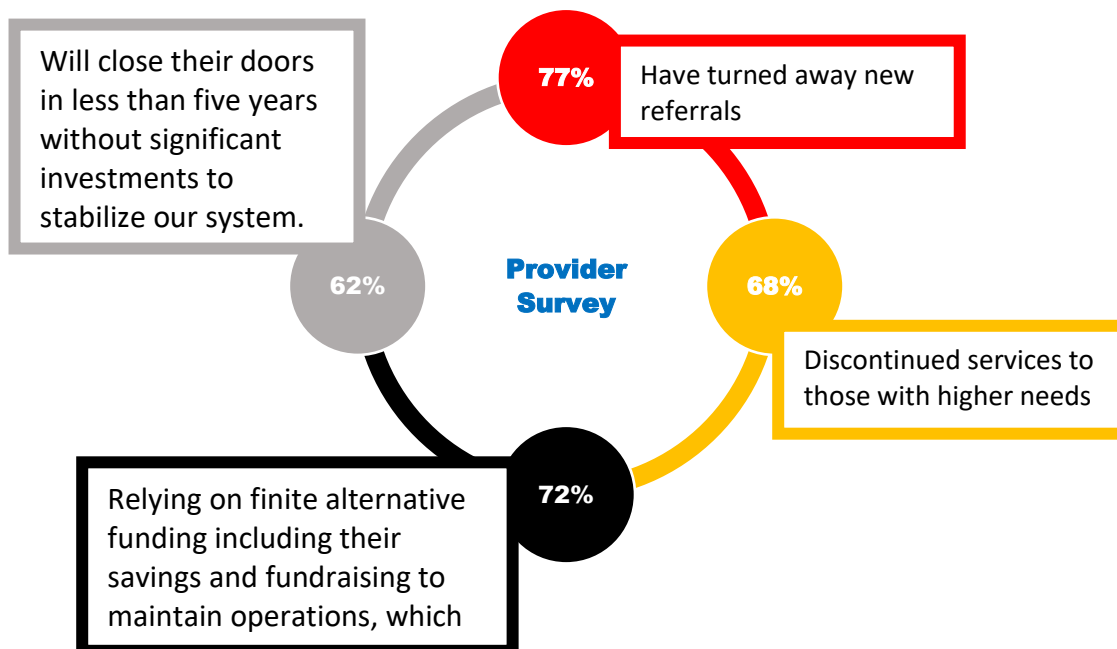
Chairman Romanchuk, Vice Chair Wilson, Ranking Member Ingram, and esteemed members of the committee. My name is Pete Moore and I represent nearly 200 providers of Medicaid-funded long-term services to Ohioans with intellectual and developmental disabilities. I am testifying in front of you today as part of a coalition of associations serving Ohio’s developmental disability system. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

Ohioans should be proud of their disability service providers and what they have been able to do over the last 3 years. In the face of a declining workforce and a global pandemic, this network of private provider agencies kept the people they support healthy and safe. But we are now deeply feeling the impact of the acceleration of the workforce crisis over the past 3 years. Despite the tireless efforts of our provider community, Ohio’s Developmental Disability support infrastructure is failing. Last week when Ohio Department of Medicaid Director Corcoran and Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) Director Hauck testified in front of this committee, they both made the case for the need for significant investment to address the workforce crisis and stabilize Ohio’s disability service system.



We are grateful for the investment Governor DeWine and DODD Director Hauck proposed in the Executive Budget, recognizing the need for competitive wages for Direct Support Professionals (DSP), the backbone of our service system. And with the passage of House Bill 33, we are grateful for the House’s gracious investment in disability services and for providing us a strong foundation to build on in this committee.

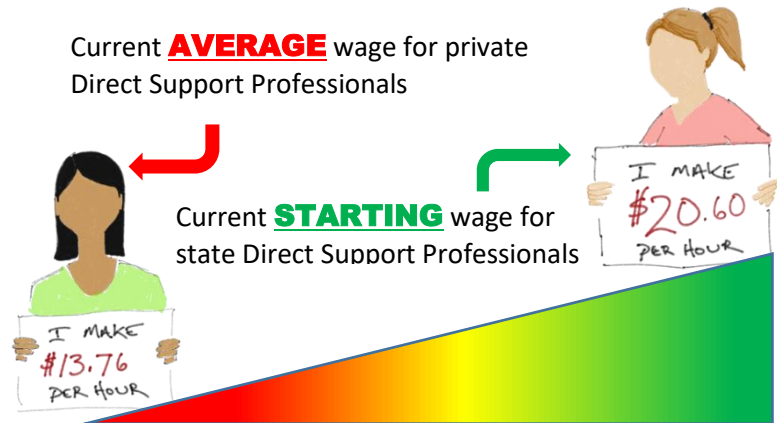
Ohio’s developmental disability provider community is struggling and in turn, as you will hear, the people they support and their families are also struggling. Last fall we surveyed our members to better understand the impact of the staffing shortages and the results were alarming.



In 2021, we testified about the possibility of a “A Day without DSPs”. I talked about our fears regarding our workforce crisis and what it means to lose and not find DSPs. A day without DSPs means a person struggles with the most basic day-to-day tasks- making a meal, taking medications, and connecting with their community. Your support and partnership over the past few budgets has been important and is greatly appreciated. But with rapid wage inflation, a changing labor landscape and ever-growing service needs, even with your support, the warning from 2 years ago is a reality today.

The developmental disabilities system is in a unique position- there is no other payer outside of Medicaid that pays for the services offered by our system. Ohio’s provider community is a business community that is 100% reliant on Medicaid funding; meaning we are 100% reliant on your support and investment. DODD’s Director Hauck has done an excellent job of making the case for investment, including the fact that

State-Operated Developmental Centers’ front-line staff, who perform similar duties as privately operated providers, earn a starting wage of \$20/hr. Due to Medicaid reimbursement rates, private providers are only able to pay an **average** wage of \$13.76/hr. We are asking for your support to close that gap.



Thank you for your time and dedication to Ohioans with developmental disabilities and their families. We are excited and eager to partner with you to as we work to sustain our system.

Respectfully submitted,



Peter J. Moore  
President and CEO  
The Ohio Provider Resource Association