

**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 Fred Major, and I am the youngest of seven boys followed by one younger sister. Three of my brothers were developmentally disabled with two of them having been involved with and cared for by Koinonia Homes organization. It was indeed an Honor being asked by Koinonia to provide testimony for the Ohio House of Representatives regarding House Bill 33 sharing my family's history and experiences with developmental health issues. The same Honor holds just as true sharing my thoughts here with you today. I sincerely hope you also take a moment to read my previous testimony in addition to this one.

The past four years have been quite an education for me since my Father's passing, stepping up to the title of "My Brother's Keeper" so to speak! The term "SUPPORT" I offer for Governor DeWine and Director Hauck's endeavor for House Bill 33 and the necessary funding it provides for ALL in the care giving industry who so deserve this correction in compensation is a gross understatement.

I have consistently interacted with many agencies from the Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities to Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, APSI and beyond trying to be as proactive and helpful as possible. The definitive result of the problems and issues I see coming to fruition in securing the much needed quality care in this field is competitive wages. Building relationships with trained, experienced and certified personnel such as Nurses and the like, I have learned that even these professionals are strained and tested on a daily basis due to the current unreasonable compensation that reflects the dangerous lack of quality people in this field to care for those who need it most!

Our recent Politically Correct Culture has people way too sensitive but at the same time loads my arsenal of common sense, humor, and irony. A bank teller today earns \$25.00 an hour, yet we can't afford to offer a livable income to a Care Giver? So the attention to a person's income, deposits and investments is worth more than the overseeing, caretaking and dignity of the individual in an ICF or Waiver Group home, both of which I am very familiar!

I know that no matter what happens to me my brother will always have a roof over his head, three squares a day, friends / roommates and the healthcare he requires. I whole heartedly implore this committee to support the House's version of H.B. 33 as it pertains to DODD appropriations. I wish to THANK in advance the Senate for investing additional dollars into these vital services to raise direct support professional wages at the very least to \$20 per hour. This investment will help recruit and retain the quality workforce needed to continue to provide the necessary services for families like mine and so, so many others who deserve this!

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