

Gina Dennison
Interested Party HB 33 Senate Medicaid Committee May 11th 2023 Hearing

Senator Romanchuk, Vice Chair Steve Wilson and Ranking Member Ingram thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 33. My name is Gina Dennison. I have several areas that I want to address in the budget bill hb 33.

Veterans Programs and Funding

Ohio needs more services and supports for Veterans across Ohio. We need to increase transportation access for rural communities for Veterans who need to access VA services and supports in Cleveland, Dayton, Columbus, Sandusky and Toledo. We should provide access to Medicaid home care services and supports for Veterans and Spouses of Veterans.

Home Care Funding and MyCare Ohio Expansion

I live in a rural community and access to home care workers is difficult for many. It takes months on end to get workers contracted with Medicaid then if you add managed care to the mix it would be more difficult for our communities that have no assurance of finding providers. Please do not expand managed care to rural communities as our access to care is already limited this would make it more difficult to access care.

My adult daughter has developmental disabilities, and she lives in a city because of the lack of resources here. We are in a desert when it comes to finding quality healthcare. I travel Two hours each way to get care at the Cleveland VA hospital. My daughter has a rare disease and the doctors are not here. She would never be able to find 24 hour care at home to meet her needs when people who live here already cannot even secure workers as it is.

Care is critical for all people with disabilities the aging baby boomers like myself and others.

My friends daughter needed access to critical home care supports and services. Direct support workers are hard to find In Huron County where we live. It is a struggle to find these workers and keep them long term due to low wages and no incentives for people to go into this field.

I ask that you raise wages for personnel care aides under Medicaid, Aging and Developmental Disabilities Waivers to a starting rate of \$20 an hour, eliminating base rates and paying a flat rate of pay. Those of us in rural communities suffer the most as poverty wages don't pay the bills. Invest in communities by improving access care.

Thank you for your time.

Gina Dennison