

**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 Howard Pincham, and I am the Chief Information Officer of the Independence, Ohio-based Koinonia Homes, Inc. We provide intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities and residential, day, and employment services through the home and community-based waiver program administered by the Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD). We serve in Cuyahoga County and several Ohio counties surrounding the greater Cleveland area. Our team of 450 employees are proud to provide essential services to more than 350 Ohioans with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

I am very supportive of the budget initiatives outlined by Governor DeWine and Director Hauck for DODD. The changing labor landscape and accompanying shortage of workers, including direct support professionals (DSP), threatens our ability to provide the critical supports on which the people we serve and their families rely.

Koinonia provides a home for over three hundred individuals. Our DSPs, their supervisors and support staff are all dependent on the Medicaid system to fund their wages. Frankly, I/DD providers in Ohio do not receive enough funding. Koinonia pays DSPs and support staff wages more than what we receive from Medicaid. We do this to stay competitive in a labor market that pays a higher wage to sort packages than Koinonia can pay for the expertise required to properly care for individuals like Katie. Low pay is a factor of the 50% turnover rate among DSP positions among all I/DD providers. Many providers, including Koinonia, have closed locations because we could not assign enough staff to support them.

I am responsible for implementing and maintaining technology at Koinonia. Since my first day on the job, almost four years ago, I have seen our dedicated Direct Service Professionals, the "DSPs", serve individuals that live with a variety of physical and mental challenges. Day and night, summer and winter, our DSPs provide a home for these wonderful people.

I am confident that with Directors Hauck and Miller's input, the Governors proposed budget initiatives provides for a budget that effectively covers I/DD services. Your investment allows Koinonia and providers throughout the state the ability to find and keep the workers that they need to maintain the proper level of services. I am asking you and your committee to support the House's version of H.B. 33 as it pertains to DODD appropriations. In addition to this, I am asking you to invest additional dollars to give us the ability to increase average DSP wages above \$20 per hour.

With your leadership, together we can ensure these services are available to the Ohioans that so greatly need them! Thank you again, for the opportunity and privilege to bring my concerns before you today.

Howard Pincham

[howard@pincham.net](mailto:howard@pincham.net)

4282 W. 182 Street

Cleveland, OH 44135

440.227.9028