



Community Services
1402 Boettler Road, Suite B
Uniontown, Ohio 44685

(330) 274-2272 | (800) 233-8611
www.hattielarlham.org

Testimony on SFY 24/25 Operating Budget Senate Medicaid Committee

Chairman Romanchuk, Vice Chair Wilson, Ranking Member Ingram, and esteemed committee members,

I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.

My name is Kim Bartell and I am the Vice President of Community Services at Hattie Larlham. We are located in Mantua OH. Hattie Larlham provides HCBS waiver (residential, day, employment and shared living) and Intermediate Care services in both Northeast and Central Ohio. Our team of 850 full and part-time employees are proud to provide essential services to 1600 Ohioans with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

I am very supportive of the budget initiatives outlined by Governor DeWine and Director Hauck for DODD and very appreciative of the additional investments adopted by the House of Representatives in House Bill 33.

Providers of DD services are competing with a variety of employers for a limited workforce. Employers in the food service and retail industries are offering starting wages of \$17 to \$20 per hour. Our current reimbursement system will simply not allow us to pay these wages, therefore, not allowing us to be a competitive employer.

Those we serve are some of the most vulnerable. Direct Support Professionals provide a safe, secure and loving environment to persons served. I/DD service providers help those with disabilities live a full and happy life outside of their family homes. Our DSPs help persons served live, work, and play in their communities. They assist individuals learn how to be independent by providing support in meal planning and preparation, housekeeping and personal care. Most importantly, our DSPs help educate the community and introduce those we serve to become and active community members. Direct Support professionals are truly the foundation to I/DD service provision.

House Bill 33 as passed by the House is a great foundation to reinforce and rebuild the services provided by Hattie Larlham. We encourage this committee to support the House's version of H.B. 33 as it pertains to DODD appropriations. Further, we encourage the Senate to invest additional dollars



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into these vital services to raise direct support professional wages to at least an average of \$20.64. This investment will help us recruit and retain the workforce needed to continue to provide our quality services.

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 and if I can ever be of any help in this process, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Kim Bartell
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