

HB225  
Julie Taylor  
Proponent Testimony  
House Commerce and Labor Committee  
May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Chair Johnson, Vice Chair Lear, Ranking Member McNally, and all other members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee:

Hello! My name is Julie Taylor and I am testifying in support of HB225 and Fair Pay for People with Disabilities.

I work as a senior consultant with Griffin Hammis Associates, an organization that provides training, mentoring, systems transformation and policy development to states, local programs, employment support providers, and the federal government related to community-based employment.

I currently work with several states including Georgia and New York as they participate in The Disability Innovation Fund Program's Subminimum Wage to Competitive Integrated Employment Model Demonstration projects (SWCTIE). This project is supporting fourteen state grantees to improve options for transitioning people with disabilities from subminimum wage employment to competitive integrated employment. I provide training, technical assistance, policy consultation, and mentoring for individual employment seekers and their teams.

I also have had the privilege of working with Micah on his employment journey! Using innovative employment support strategies, Micah was able to explore work in the community, identify his skills by trying out tasks in businesses, and find a job match that is meaningful to him as well as meeting the employers business needs, while also being paid a commensurate wage.

Ohio already has a strong foundation, good funding to do real community employment, and to creative community inclusive opportunities for people to contribute their skills and gifts via work. There are a variety of evidence-based practices such as supported employment strategies and customized employment strategies that can enable people to reach these goals.

In his book, Twenty-two cents an hour: Disability Rights and the Fight to End Subminimum Wages, my colleague Doug Crandell, writes, "It is terrible public policy to say to one group of people that because of the way you are, because of the label, or what kind of schooling you got, or whatever disability you have, we are going to pay you ( below the minimum

wage)”. Let’s be on the leading side of public policy as well as being FOR everyone’s right to have their contributions be valued and paid fairly.