

Testimony in Support of House Bill 225

By James Harley

May 21, 2025



Chairperson, Vice Chair, Ranking Member, and members of the committee,

My name is James Harley, and I am a person with a disability. I am writing today to express my strong support for House Bill 225, which seeks to eliminate the use of subminimum wage for people with disabilities in Ohio.

As someone who has experienced firsthand the challenges of being undervalued in the workplace, I know how important it is that people with disabilities are paid fairly for the work we do. I used to work in a position where I was paid a subminimum wage simply because I had a disability. Despite putting in real effort and doing real work, I was not given the same pay or respect as others. It was discouraging and disempowering.

Thankfully, I later had the opportunity to transition into a job in the community that pays at least minimum wage. This change made a huge difference in my life. Not only did I gain more financial independence, but I also became more connected with my community. I pay taxes, I contribute to my workplace, and I feel valued for the skills and talents I bring. Being fairly paid helped me build confidence and a sense of pride in what I do.

Ending subminimum wage is not just about money—it's about dignity, equality, and recognizing that people with disabilities deserve the same opportunities and respect as everyone else. House Bill 225 is a step toward a more inclusive and just Ohio.

Thank you for your time and for considering your support of House Bill 225.

Sincerely,

James Harley