To the Honorable Members of the Community Revitalization Committee
Ohio House of Representatives

My name is Courtney Hineman and I am a person with a developmental disability. I am writing on behalf of the Speak Up self-advocacy group to support **House Bill 585**. "To amend section 5123.351 of the Revised Code regarding the authority of the Department of Developmental Disabilities to adopt rules regarding the use of community capital assistance funds." This bill would help create more housing choices for people like me.

Ohio has a big shortage of affordable housing. Many people cannot find a safe and affordable place to live. This is especially hard for people with developmental disabilities. In Ohio, about 108,000 people have developmental disabilities. 74% of us live with family members, and 25% of those family caregivers are getting older.

Because there is not enough affordable housing, it is hard for people with disabilities to find a place to live. The application process can also be confusing and difficult. It can be even harder for people who need homes that are accessible for wheelchairs or other mobility needs. This is why the Community Capital Assistance Funds addressed in House Bill 585 are so important.

Under Ohio Revised Code 5123.351, the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities adopted Administrative Code Rule 5123-1-03, governing the acquisition of housing through Community Capital Assistance Funds. Right now, the rules for Community Capital Assistance Funds are very limited. The funds can only be used for single-family houses, duplexes, and quadplexes. The rules also say that no more than four people can live on one site, and there cannot be multiple buildings on the same property. These rules make it harder to create enough housing for people with developmental disabilities like me.

People with developmental disabilities have different needs and preferences, just like everyone else. The current rules do not allow enough choices.

House Bill 585 would allow the state to update these rules. It would allow more types of housing and make it easier to combine these funds with other affordable housing programs. This would help build more homes and give people with disabilities more choices.

For example, some units in larger housing developments could be set aside for people with developmental disabilities. This would allow us to live in regular neighborhoods with access to stores, transportation, and community activities. It could also allow seniors, workers, and family caregivers to live in the same communities.

House Bill 585 does not ask for new funding. It simply allows the state to use existing funds in better and more flexible ways. This would help create more housing options for people with developmental disabilities.

Having a safe and affordable place to live is very important to me and many others. I respectfully ask you to move House Bill 585 forward so it can be considered by the full House.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Courtney R. Hineman