Testimony HB 585

May 11, 2026

Dear Chair Click, Vice Chair Mullins and Ranking Member Brewer,

I am writing on behalf of The Arc of Ohio with trepidation regarding the language in HB 585. While we recognize and agree that Ohio is facing a significant housing shortage for people with developmental disabilities, the language in HB 585 regarding “community capital assistance funds” relaxes rules meant to protect people with disabilities in our community.

We want to be clear: we understand the urgency of the housing crisis. There are not enough accessible, affordable housing options for people with disabilities across Ohio. However, relaxing rules and failing to adhere to the federal settings rule is not the solution. Weakening standards risks creating more segregated, provider-controlled, or congregate settings that limit independence rather than expand it.

This approach conflicts with best practices in disability policy and the integration mandate established in Olmstead v. L.C., as well as the requirements of the HCBS Settings Rule, both of which emphasize that people with disabilities have the right to live in the most integrated setting appropriate.

The Arc of Ohio strongly supports expanding housing opportunities, but those opportunities must be person driven, not system driven, fully compliant with the HCBS Settings Rule and integrated into the broader community not into disability-specific clusters. There are great organizations like LADD and All Inclusive Living doing the hard, person-centered work of bringing housing to our community members with disabilities. We should invest in these models.

Without stronger protections and a clear commitment to the settings rule, SB 585 risks repeating mistakes of the past—where people with disabilities are placed into settings that limit autonomy rather than support it.

For these reasons, The Arc of Ohio respectfully urges this committee to amend this section to ensure that housing is truly independent, integrated, and controlled by the individual.

Sincerely,

Jen Powers Alge, JD.

Director of Policy and Civil Rights

The Arc of Ohio

513-222-1087

Jen.powersalge@thearcofohio.org