

Written Testimony on HB96
Submitted by Elise Brunkalla
Jackson Township, Stark County

3.31.2025

Dear Members of the Ohio General Assembly,

My name is Elise Brunkalla, and I am 21 years old. I live in Jackson Township in Stark County, and I have Down syndrome. I am writing to ask you not to cut Medicaid or Medicaid waivers in the state budget.

Most people don't understand what Medicaid waivers are or how important they are to people with disabilities. I have a Level One Waiver through Stark County Developmental Disabilities (Stark DD). This is a type of Home and Community-Based Waiver (HCBW), and it helps me live, work, and be part of my community.

Because of my waiver, I'm able to get to work and have the support I need to be successful on the job. I work in a real job and earn minimum wage. I also attend a day vocational program, where I'm learning more skills and spending time with other people in my community.

I am not lazy. I work hard, and I live an active, healthy, and happy life. That's only possible because of the support I receive through Stark DD and my HCBW waiver. These supports help me live my dreams, be independent, and feel proud of who I am.

Please don't take that away from me or from others like me.

Thank you for your time and for listening to my voice.

Sincerely,
Elise Brunkalla
Jackson Township, Stark County

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