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**Testimony on SFY 26/27 Operating Budget  
House Health Committee**

Chairwoman Schmidt, Vice-Chair Deeter, Ranking Member Somani, and esteemed committee members,

My name is Jeremiah Williams and I am the Director of Business Services at Belco Works, and we are located in Belmont County. We are an organization that provides services to individuals with intellectual disabilities that include day, and employment services through the home and community-based waiver program) administered by the Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) as well as employment and vocational training through Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD). Our team of 60 employees are proud to provide essential services to 214 Ohioans with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

First, I want to express our deep gratitude for the investment in disability and vocational rehabilitation (VR) services in the last state budget. Your support allowed Ohioans with disabilities access and resources to find, keep and succeed at meaningful jobs in their communities.

**I respectfully submit this testimony in support of the budget initiatives proposed by Governor DeWine and Director Miller for Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) as outlined in House Bill 96.** These initiatives help ensure that all Ohioans have access to the resources and opportunities to be successful in the workforce and their chosen careers. The budget proposal also supports accessibility initiatives, internship opportunities, and state partnerships that help Ohioans with disabilities live, work and thrive in their communities.

We have been able to assist several people and their families in learning about the possibilities of work in the community. We have helped many people obtain community employment, and enriched the lives of so many others. There are many things that people without disabilities take for granted. The simple feeling of accomplishment that we all get from doing our job and making money. The idea of contributing to society by paying taxes on wages that you earned. The relationships that we build in our communities do everyday things. These are all things that a person with a disability may not be able to obtain without some type of assistance. These are all essential things, such as feeling like we belong in society. A feeling of kinship and brotherhood with our fellow man. Please don't dismiss these things as inconsequential just because we take them for granted. These are basic human rights, and the service that companies like ours provide gives people with disabilities an opportunity to obtain these. These services are a vital part of people's lives.

# BELCO WORKS, INC.

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The budget initiatives for Ohioans with developmental disabilities, guided by the leadership of Director Miller, will reinforce and strengthen the services provided by Belco Works. **We encourage this committee to support the OOD budget proposal as outlined in HB 96.**

With your leadership, together we can ensure these services are available to the Ohioans that so greatly need them! **Thank you again, for the opportunity and privilege to bring my testimony before you today.**



Jeremiah Williams

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