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Interested Party Testimony for House Bill 32

Thank you, Chair Schmidt, Vice Chair Deeter, Ranking Member Somani, and members of the House Health Committee for the opportunity to provide testimony on the importance of recognizing the disability community in Ohio. My name is Brittanie Maddox and I am Vice Chair of the Ohio Olmstead Task Force (OOTF). On behalf of my organization, please accept this testimony for HB 32.

OOTF is a statewide grassroots coalition of Ohioans with disabilities of all ages, family members, advocates, and organizations advocating for the right to live, work, and participate in their communities. Formed in 2002, OOTF supports the Supreme Court decision that held unnecessary institutionalization is discrimination against people with disabilities.

As provided by the sponsors, this bill seeks to affirm that Ohioans with disabilities are valuable members to our society and deserve to be recognized. The disability community has faced many struggles, discrimination, and continues to face obstacles to full participation. Part of OOTF's mission is to ensure that the state of Ohio is upholding its obligations to the Supreme Court's Olmstead Decision. We fight everyday for the rights of people with disabilities to seek the employment that they desire, live in a space that is accessible for them, and the opportunities to socialize with their neighbors, friends, and families.

Governor DeWine stated at the Accessible Ohio Conference and Expo on July 24, 2025:

"Ohio's strength lies in its people, and we can't afford to leave anyone behind. Accessibility is a mindset that we should always be thinking about, from education and employment to recreation and civic engagement. We're grateful for the positive impact individuals with disabilities have had on Ohio's workforce and communities. By breaking down barriers and providing opportunities, we tap into the tremendous potential of all our citizens."

We all want Ohio to be a state that truly is for everyone. We are excited to see members of the 136th General Assembly recognize the disability community, honor their struggles, and continue Governor DeWine's sentiment. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and please reach out with any questions!

Sincerely,

Brittanie Maddox

Vice Chair, OOTF

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