



Dear Senate Finance Committee Members,

Thank you for letting me provide written testimony regarding Ohio House Bill 96.

My name is Abigail Davis, and I am a Habilitation Coordinator. I work at Echoing Connections, a part of Echoing Hills, in Athens, Ohio. In this position I oversee the daily implementation of active treatment within the adult day service setting. As a member of the supervisory management team, I also assist in guiding the overall direction of the program. I have been in my current position for over 6 years.

Before the last budget's pay increase, many of the waiver staff in my location were struggling to make ends meet. As a two-parent household with three young children, we were struggling to maintain childcare and other parenting expenses. We were starting to question whether it was worth it for me to continue to work.

Because of the pay increase, we were able to put away that heavy decision. I was able to stay at the job that I love, and we are now able to meet the financial needs of our family. In addition to maintaining childcare expenses, we have since been able to purchase an updated car seat for our daughter, we paid off a medical bill, and we were able to purchase Christmas presents for our children. All these things would have otherwise been a struggle.

I am concerned that the Governor's proposed budget does not include more money for DSPs and other staff working in waiver settings. Without action from you, we'll be right back where we started. We cannot afford to lose more qualified, caring workers.

I ask you to:

- 1. Include a rate increase for DSPs and other staff in waiver settings.**
- 2. Create systems to regularly adjust pay so we don't face this crisis again.**

The individuals that I support at Echoing Connections depend on me and the DSPs I work with. We need to make sure that this is a job people can afford to do, so we can continue providing quality care.

Thank you for your time.

Abigail Davis
abdavis@ehvi.org
88 Columbus Circle Drive, Athens, Ohio 45701
740-249-4353