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6/5/25

Senate Finance Committee,

I am not only a business owner, a BCBA and on the Ohio Board of Applied Behavior Analysis for policy but also a parent of two boys with a diagnosis of autism. Without my education and experience, statistics show they would be much further behind than they currently are. I have fought to open ABA clinics in Ohio after working in Indiana for years. The only way to keep the doors open is to get rates that are enough to pay the bills and a living wage for staff. A couple of our clinics border Indiana and we are constantly battling staff leaving our great state to work there, for higher pay. I have masters level BCBAs coming to work with me but for a lower pay due to our mission. That isn't sustainable long term. Around 99% of our entry level staff require our in house RBT training. We have to start from scratch to be able to provide these needed services. That takes not only time but a lot of resources we need to be able to afford.

While working in Indiana, I had a previous parent contact me asking. "Why do kids in Indiana get a chance while our kids don't?" That has been my beacon for forging through to get these life changing services to as many kids with autism as possible. When you are looking at these amendments ask yourself, why do individuals in surrounding states get what our own don't. That is what keeps me up at night.

Please move these proposed amendments forward so that we have a fighting chance to help change these kids/families' lives. We cannot wait any longer for these changes.

Sincerely,

Emily Karhoff MA BCBA COBA