



110 Foss Way
Troy, OH 45373
937-335-5784
www.rtindustries.org

Testimony on SFY 26/27 Operating Budget Senate Medicaid Committee

Good morning, Chair Romanchuk, Vice-Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Liston, and committee members.

Thank you for letting me speak to you today.

My name is **Bonnie Stockstill**, and I'm an **Employment Services Coordinator**. I work in **Troy, Ohio** and provide services like **pre-employment training for youth and adults**. I was a **Direct Support Professions (DSP)** for **16 years**, and I've been an **Employment Services Coordinator** for **three**.

Before the last budget's pay increase, DSPs were struggling. I loved being a DSP and now love being a coordinator, but making ends meet before the last budget increase was difficult. After work, I'd go home and operate my small baking business to earn extra income. Living paycheck to paycheck is extremely stressful on top of a position that is your calling but provides its own type of added stress. At points, it feels like stress is hitting you from all sides which is not healthy for our minds and bodies.

Since the pay increase, things have changed for the better. I have been able to close my baking business and focus on enjoying my evenings rather than staying up late to get orders completed. Resting helps me bring my best self to the people I serve. This has made a real difference in my life and the lives of the people I support. Thank you for recognizing the importance of this work.

I'm concerned because the Governor's proposed budget doesn't include more money for DSPs working in waiver settings. Without action from you, we'll be right back where we started. We can't afford to lose more qualified, caring workers.

I ask you to:

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

*Helping people achieve personal success by developing skills
to confidently work, interact and thrive in the community.*

~ Safety ~ Collaboration ~ Camaraderie ~ Growth ~ Integrity ~ Excellence ~ Innovation ~





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The people I support rely on me and other DSPs. We need to make sure this is a job people can afford to do, so we can continue providing quality care.

Thank you for your time.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Bonnie C. Stockstill'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Bonnie' and last name 'Stockstill' clearly legible.

Bonnie Stockstill
bonnie.stockstill@rtindustries.org
110 Foss Way, Troy, OH 45373
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