



**Ohio Senate Medicaid Committee
House Bill 96 Proponent Testimony
May 15, 2025**

**Robert Heinzerling
Executive Director
Heinzerling Community**

Chairman Romanchuk, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the Senate Medicaid Committee. My name is Robert Heinzerling, and I am the Executive Director of Heinzerling Community, an Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) that has proudly served Central Ohio's most medically fragile and disabled citizens since 1959. Our campus, located on the west side of Columbus, is the only facility in Franklin County offering 24/7 residential care exclusively for individuals with profound developmental disabilities. Today, approximately 475 dedicated staff members work together to provide a loving home environment and intensive care to over 155 children and adults with severe or profound developmental disabilities.

First and foremost, I want to express my sincere gratitude to the legislature for your critical support of direct service provider (DSP) wages in the last budget. The work our staff performs is nothing short of heroic, and like many ICFs, Heinzerling faced significant challenges in filling open positions. I am pleased to report that, thanks to the DSP wage increase, Heinzerling has emerged from the most severe staffing shortage in our 60-year history. This support has been transformative for our organization and the individuals we serve. This is why we strongly support the Governor's proposed budget for ICF funding. As 100% of our residents rely on Medicaid, without this funding increase, we simply cannot remain competitive in attracting and retaining the talented, compassionate staff needed to provide the level of care our residents deserve.

I also respectfully request the legislature include a modification to the equipment component of the ICF formula to adjust annually with inflation and align with actual costs, as reflected in amendment SC 0294. ICFs provide critical residential services for people with severe and profound disabilities. To operate effectively, these facilities rely on essential equipment, including accessible vehicles, medical equipment, and other infrastructure to support community inclusion and daily living needs.

Ohio law sets annual spending limits, or "ceilings," on various cost components for ICFs. While most ceilings adjust annually to reflect cost increases, the ICF equipment ceiling has remained unchanged since 2017 — despite significant inflation and rising costs. This change will allow ICFs to:

- 1) Replace aging, high-cost equipment,
- 2) Invest in vehicles and adaptive tools that enhance mobility and independence, and
- 3) Keep pace with inflation, avoiding funding shortfalls that threaten quality of care.

Thank you for your consideration of these incredibly important issues. ***I urge you to maintain the ICF funding in the Governor's as-introduced budget and support amendment SC 0294.***
Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

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