



HB 96 Proponent Testimony
Jen Powers Alge
Ohio Senate Medicaid Committee
Chair Mark Romanchuk
May 15, 2025

Chairman Romanchuk, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the Senate Medicaid Committee, my name is Jen Powers Alge and I am the Regional Director of the Arc of Ohio located in Southwest Ohio. I have two children with developmental disabilities. I am submitting this testimony as an interested party on HB 96.

I am writing to you today to endorse HB 96 which establishes the presumption that adults with developmental disabilities are capable of making their own decisions about their lives.

Supported decision-making is the process of supporting and accommodating adults living with developmental disabilities who are making, communicating and implementing their own life decisions without impeding their self-determination. These individualized plans are utilized by people with disabilities and their chosen supporters to structure plans for how to make daily and long-term decisions regarding, but not limited to medical treatment, Medicaid, employment, education, and finances.

For a long time, people with disabilities have been establishing supported decision-making plans with people that they have chosen to help support them. Everyone needs support and people with disabilities are especially skilled at finding the people in their lives who can help support and accommodate their choices. We believe these plans give people with developmental disabilities and their families the structure they need to feel safe and thriving in their communities. In Ohio, we help people with disabilities by providing early intervention and support and accommodations in school. This Bill is for the transition into adulthood and beyond. Transition into adulthood can be a particularly difficult time for a person with a disability and their family, unless they have a plan. This Bill defines an alternative to guardianship and will allow families to continue to support their loved one with a disability well into adulthood without taking away their deserved autonomy.

The Arc of Ohio is a grassroots organization which advocates for human rights, personal dignity and community participation of individuals with developmental disabilities through legislative and social action, information and education, local chapter support, and family involvement. **Please support amendment SC1002 to restore the language from the as-introduced bill to recognize supported decision-making in Ohio law.** The Arc of Ohio is proud to support this bill and encourages you and all members to pass this important legislation. Chair Romanchuk and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony as an interested party on HB 96.

Sincerely,
Jen Powers Alge
Regional Director
The Arc of Ohio
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