



**Testimony for Senate Medicaid Committee – May 15, 2025**  
**Lauren Holly, Executive Director, Brain Injury Association of Ohio**  
**In Support of Increased Funding for Brain Injury Services in HB 96**

Chairman Romanchuk, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the Senate Medicaid Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today on behalf of the Brain Injury Association of Ohio.

We are grateful that the Ohio House recognized the need to increase funding for brain injury services in their version of the state budget. However, the reality is that Ohio remains significantly underfunded when it comes to supporting individuals living with brain injuries. The current increase, while appreciated, is not enough to address the magnitude of need across our state. Today, we urge the Senate to strengthen this commitment and increase funding for the Ohio Brain Injury Program further.

The Ohio BRAINs Proposal—developed collaboratively by the Brain Injury Association of Ohio and the Ohio Brain Injury Program—lays out a clear, cost-effective plan. It invests in evidence-based services that support Ohioans in returning to work, school, and community living, while also ensuring access to appropriate mental health care. These services not only improve individual outcomes—they also save the state money by reducing dependency on state programs and long-term institutional care.

Right now in Ohio, our infrastructure is so limited that we are often forced to refer individuals out of state just to access the services they need. We have not yet fully executed a functional bridge between inpatient care and life in the community. Survivors frequently reach us years after their injury—many saying, “If only I had found you sooner, my life could have been so different.”

I speak today on behalf of the 1.6 million Ohioans who have experienced at least one traumatic brain injury in their lifetime—and the countless others whose brain injuries stem from stroke, overdose, or other causes. Without sufficient investment, these individuals remain at risk of falling through the cracks—unable to access care, unable to fully participate in their communities, and too often institutionalized in settings where they do not belong.

We urge this Committee to increase funding for the Ohio Brain Injury Program in this budget cycle to help us improve the care and outcomes for our Ohioans who have sustained a brain injury.

Thank you for your time and your leadership. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.