



May 8, 2025

Re: Testimony on SFY 26/27 Operating Budget - Senate Medicaid Committee

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

I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.

My name is Mary Horoszko, and I am the Chief Development Officer at Hattie Larlham, an Ohio disability service organization in Mantua, and one of the largest providers to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD) in the state.

Hattie Larlham serves over 1600 people, at over ninety locations, in eleven counties throughout Northeast and Central Ohio. I am also the family member of developmentally disabled individual who, since my last testimony is now served by Hattie Larlham and depends on residential care and Direct Service Providers, (DSPs) to help her live and thrive every day.

I know firsthand the impact and importance ID/DD care has on an individual in need; the strain it puts on a family to rely on the aid and assistance of others to care for a loved one, and the demand required to provide professional, consistent, compassionate care to those who cannot care for themselves. Every human being deserves to live their best life; those being cared for and those who are providing the care.

Ohio's DD system is once in crisis, and we need your help.

As you are aware, the DD provider community in Ohio has been significantly challenged by staffing issues over the past several years. The last budget cycle had a tremendous impact on that as staff received a competitive wage and retaining employees has dramatically changed as a result of that increase.

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.**

With your leadership, together we can ensure these services are available to those who so greatly need them, and every Ohioan lives their best life! Thank you again, for the opportunity and privilege to bring my concerns before you and if I can help further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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