

## Written Testimony to the Ohio Representatives Regarding Anatomical Gifts, Transplants, and Discrimination

From Rachel Rice

University of Cincinnati Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCCEDD) and  
Leadership and Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND)

November 29, 2017

RE: House Bill 332: Regarding Anatomical Gifts, Transplants, and Discrimination

Sponsors: Rep Antani

Chair Huffman, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Antonio, and Members of the House Health Committee:

My name is Rachel Rice. I am the Self-Advocate Trainee in this year's Cincinnati LEND cohort. I am also the Advocacy Assistant for the Warren County Board of Developmental Disabilities. I am a person with a disability who personally and professionally cares about disability rights. This testimony represents my own views. I first learned about HB 332 at the start of this LEND year. I've learned about many disability policies. HB 332 modifies the revised code 2108.36-.38 to prevent discrimination. I thought this proposal was very interesting and I started researching organ transplantation and discrimination experienced by people with disabilities. After my research, I knew that I had to get involved in teaching others about this policy.

Everybody matters-regardless of disability. Many people aren't aware that individuals with disabilities are being denied transplants because their lives are considered less worthy. If you've had a family member with a disability, you know that our lives are no less worthy. Public awareness that discrimination exists is important and this policy would also make it possible for people with disabilities to have the same chance at life after organ transplantation offered to others.

I think it's important that the policy also ensures that hospitals and insurance companies don't discriminate on the basis of disability. The bill also requires health care professionals to make treatment and services as accessible as possible. This is important.

Please consider lives like mine and the lives of my friends, co-workers, and other community members with disabilities. No one knows that they will need an organ transplant to live but if it happens, we deserve a chance to continue living. Thank-you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. If you have any questions about my testimony, I can be reached at [Rachel.rice@cchmc.org](mailto:Rachel.rice@cchmc.org).

Sincerely yours,

Rachel Rice