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February 11, 2020

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Manning, and members of the House Health Committee — I stand before you today offering sponsor testimony on House Concurrent Resolution 20 along with my joint sponsor and ranking member of this committee Representative Janine Boyd

Representative Boyd has outlined the justification for this resolution. As the record reflects, our colleagues unanimously passed House Bill 287 on November 6, sending a strong bipartisan message that we here in Ohio support our military families. While this is a great step for Ohioans, and those on active duty serving here in the Buckeye state, the adoption of House Concurrent Resolution 20 would urge our colleagues in D.C. to follow the lead of Ohio by helping lift the burden on military families who have to move to Ohio.

Throughout my 18 years of military service, and counting, serving in both the United States Army and Navy, I have seen many families relocate across the country and overseas in order to continue to answer our nation's call to service. Having to move from state to state every couple of years can not only prove challenging on the service member, I am here to tell you it is tough on families. Coupling this with the stress of worrying about reapplying for home and community-based Medicaid services for families with special needs is unacceptable.

Thirty-four states have programs similar to House Bill 287; however, military personnel often do not have the choice of where they are stationed. In other words, it is a gamble if their next duty assignment is located in a state with a reciprocity system for Medicaid home and community-based services.

My fellow Ohioans, the bottom line is simple. The men and women in our armed services are committed to a cause greater than their own. We have an all-volunteer force, and the service and sacrifice of these patriots comes at a cost most of us may never know. We honor and respect those who make up the less than one percent of the United States' population who serve. I ask for your unanimous backing in urging our colleagues in Washington to support our military families with special needs by standardizing home and community-based Medicaid waiver programs.

Thank you, and we will be happy to take any questions.