



INDEPENDENCE

OF PORTAGE COUNTY

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Testimony on HB 110 House Finance Health and Human Services Sub-Committee

Chairman Roemer, Ranking Member West, and esteemed committee members:

I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify before you today. My name is Autumn Calhoun and I am the Coordinator of the Day Program of Independence Inc, and we are located in Ravenna, OH. We are a not for profit business that provides supports for 110 Ohioans with intellectual and developmental disabilities and we employ 200.

I am very supportive of the budget initiatives outlined by Governor DeWine, Director Davis for the Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), and Director Miller for Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) With these budget initiatives and the leadership of Director Davis and Director Miller, Ohioans with developmental and intellectual disabilities will continue to receive the vital services that organizations like mine provide.

Our Services are so important to the daily lives of our individuals. We are able to work on daily living skills. We help get the individuals out so they can participate in their communities. Extra investments in our field could help get the individuals better care by getting more dedicated staff.

To best support these services and the Ohioans who receive and provide them, I encourage you to add the following initiatives into Ohio's biennium budget:

- Increase general revenue fund appropriations in DODD's budget to fund much needed Homemaker and Personal Care, Day and Vocational Services and Nonmedical Transportation Medicaid home and community based waiver services rate increase. *These increases will provide much needed funds for Direct Support Professional (DSP) wages, support for other front-line professionals and sustain the infrastructure necessary to provide our services.*
- Increase general revenue fund appropriations in DODD's budget to support the reimbursement formula for intermediate care facilities (ICF).
- Support a budget amendment that would allow ICFs to choose between a reimbursement rate freeze or a continuation of the formula for the first year of the biennium.
- Support the creation of a Task Force to address our system's workforce challenges. *This Task Force will identify several initiatives and projects designed to help providers recruit and retain a qualified workforce.*
- Support the as introduced budget for Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities

With your leadership, together we can ensure these services are available to the Ohioans that so greatly need them! **Thank you again, for the opportunity and privilege to bring my concerns before you and if I can ever be of any help in this process, please let me know.**

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