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Testimony on HB 110 Ohio Senate Finance Committee May 13th, 2021

Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Minority Member Sykes and esteemed Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to submit written testimony to the Committee today on HB 110.

My name is Trent Grooms and I am the Chief Operations Officer of Choices in Community Living, and we are located in 7 counties. We are a not for profit business providing supports for over 300 Ohioans with intellectual and developmental disabilities and we employ 350. We have helped individuals buy their own homes, travel, gain employment and live successfully in the community. I write today to encourage the Committee to increasing funding for services administered by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities.

During the pandemic our ability to hire and retain qualified staff has become more difficult even though the needs of individuals remained the same. Our workforce is charged with ensuring health and safety, meal planning, shopping and even passing medications, the typical task of a nurse. Unfortunately, often at wages less than a fast-food worker.

The House's version of HB 110 makes a small investment in day services for Ohioans with intellectual and developmental disabilities. While any investment in these services is welcomed, I believe there is still more the General Assembly can do to ensure the sustainability and accessibility of services for Ohioans with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Additional funding

My staff have done amazing and heroic things since the pandemic began, but they are tired, emotionally exhausted and need help. I encourage you to add amendment SC 2290 into the HB 110 to support the following initiatives to best support my staff, my services, and the Ohioans we support:

- Increase general revenue fund appropriations in the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities budget to fund much needed rate increases for homemaker and personal care, day, vocational and employment services, nonmedical transportation, respite services, and shared living under the three Home and Community Based Services waivers administered by DODD.
- Increase general revenue fund appropriations in DODD's budget to support the reimbursement formula for intermediate care facilities (ICF).
 1. Allow a temporary change in statute to alter the ICF reimbursement rate calculations for the first year of the biennium.

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1. Support the creation of a task force to address our system's workforce challenges.

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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