

February 7, 2022

**Scott Peters**  
705 Walnut St.  
Perrysburg, OH 43551

Dear Senator Huffman,

I am an occupational and social justice advocate for the underserved in the state of Ohio. Today, I am submitting a request for the state to continue the work set in motion by House Bill 158 in 2016, which aimed to replace derogatory references to a “mentally retarded person” from the Ohio Revised Code. While House Bill 158 was a step towards needed change, we must not lose momentum, as unnecessarily harmful language such as “idiot,” “lunatics,” “derangement,” “mentally retarded,” “crippled child/children,” “mental defective,” “deaf and dumb” and “handicapped” remain. Now more than ever, society has begun to recognize the traumatic and prejudicial effect such language has on individuals with disabilities.

I, a life-long resident of Ohio, have seen first-hand the affliction that such language has caused our community members. Mothers and fathers incessantly battling labels such as “mentally retarded,” that have involuntarily been ascribed to their child; fellow community members seen through the eyes of the state as an “idiot” due to a long-ago diagnosed learning disorder. We cannot expect to effect change at the community level if such language is enabled at the governmental level.

It is our sense of belonging within the community and relatedness with its members that makes Ohio the great state it is; we would all be remiss if individuals with disabilities were inadvertently alienated due to legal stereotyping. As a member of the occupational therapy and social justice communities I am asking the state of Ohio to review and amend all Ohio laws that include the aforementioned derogatory terms, including language in the state constitution.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Peters". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

**Scott N. Peters, ACSM-EP**  
*Occupational Therapy Doctoral Student*  
The University of Toledo  
Class of 2022