

Chairwoman Kunze, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Transportation Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to offer proponent testimony on House Bill 31.

Youth Challenge (YC) represents over 200 individuals and their families in Northeast Ohio. We are also a proud member of ADA Cleveland, a group of Greater Cleveland non profits who advocate for people with disabilities. All YC participants have a physical disability. YC provides over 4,000 rides per year with a fleet of 6 lift-equipped ADA accessible vehicles. On countless occasions and in a multitude of communities, while picking children up from schools, daycares, or transporting to activities throughout Cuyahoga, Lake, and Lorain County, our drivers encounter ADA parking violations. This means circling school parking lots instead of waiting in a lot for a child, waiting for an illegally parked car to move (thus delaying an entire route), and creating an unsafe environment for other drivers and passengers. YC families, including the Dooley Family feel helpless in combatting these violations.

The following pictures were taken by Donna Dooley on 12/4/2020 at Giant Eagle parking lot in Parma, Ohio. Donna's daughter, Sarah, is a quadriplegic and is non-verbal. She uses a power wheelchair and steers with her head. They are constantly battling parking violations and often ignored when they present violations to authorities.

Additionally, families attest that authorities are slow to respond and there is no discernable mechanism for consistent or effective enforcement of the law. Furthermore, as we see every winter, there is blatant disregard for the law every time snow plows prioritize piling snow on the ADA parking spots, presumably because they are the least likely to be used. A voluntary reporting program would appropriately assist law enforcement and create a needed avenue for correcting behaviors that plague the disability community.

I respectfully ask for your support of this legislation. Thank you all for your time and I am happy to answer any questions.

Photos from Giant Eagle parking lot, Parma, Ohio, 12/4/2020:



