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**Senate Bill 243 Sponsor Testimony**  
**Heath, Human Services, and Medicaid Committee**  
**Tuesday, January 30, 2018**

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Chairman Burke, Vice Chair Beagle, Ranking Member Tavares, members of the Heath, Human Services, and Medicaid Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 243.

This legislation would exclude a Medicaid recipient who has a developmental disability or serious mental illness and whose sole source of income is social security disability insurance (SSDI) and/or supplemental security income benefits (SSI) from paying a copayment for any Medicaid service. In 2016, there were 26,100 individuals whose sole income was SSI or SSDI, which is expected to remain steady. If all of these individuals were to pay a co-payment, the total copayment revenue is estimated to be \$225,000 per year.

This issue was brought to me by my constituent named Mark of Rocky River. Mark is the father of Andrew who is 25 years old. Andrew has been disabled since infancy and suffers from severe autism and several co-morbid neurological diagnoses. He is mentally incompetent by order of the probate court and will never live independently. He requires 24/7 care for all of his basic living activities. Andrew first received SSI benefits at age 18 which have since peaked at \$735 per month. Recently, as Mark reached full retirement age for Social Security, Andrew was moved to the SSDI, set at 50% of Mark's monthly benefit.

Mark asked for this law change so that people like Andrew would not be required to make any co-payments when obtaining prescription drugs under their Medicaid benefit. Currently, that exclusion is only given to those individuals who are living in an institutional setting. Andrew lives with his family, which, according to Mark, is far better for him and much less expensive than the alternative. Even if the co-payments seem nominal to the average citizen, which Mark says is about \$8-\$12 a day, this

represents a day's worth of food, or spending this money on Andrew's activities of choice which include going to the movies or getting ice cream with his father.

Citizens like Andrew will never have the opportunity to earn money beyond their fixed income. This bill, at little cost to the state, would provide financial relief for individuals who already have a limited income and who rely heavily on the support of others. Thank you, Chairman Burke and members of the committee for allowing me to speak to this legislation. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.