



February 7th, 2024

Ohio House  
Homeland Security Committee  
H.B. 321  
Chairperson Ghanbari

Chairperson Ghanbari, Vice Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Thomas and Members of the House Homeland Security Committee:

I would first like to thank the committee for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 321 and would like to thank Representatives Click, Lorenz, and their cosponsors for bringing forth this important piece of legislation. As President and CEO of the Ohio Provider Resource Association (OPRA), I offer **OPRA's support for H.B. 321**.

OPRA is a state-wide trade association representing nearly 200 private organizations who provide Medicaid-funded long-term services and supports to over 32,000 Ohioans with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). These services occur in the residential settings serving 1 or 2 people to larger settings, during the day in facilities and in the community, and in workplaces.

We believe in meaningful and helpful relationships between people with developmental disabilities, the professionals who support them, and essential community entities, including first responders. It is important that the developmental disability community work closely with first responders to ensure successful outcomes for all involved, especially when it comes to the challenging situations that may need the intervention of first responders. There is always the chance that any one of us will interact with first responders at some point in our lives, the likelihood is no different for people with developmental disabilities but there may be some specialized considerations for the people our system supports.

With this bill, we believe that first responders will be better prepared to navigate the interactions with people with developmental disabilities and the people who support them. First responders will be equipped to navigate the communication needs, medical needs, other behavior and mental health needs as they arrive to assist and support people during vulnerable times in their life. H.B. 321 is another positive step our state is taking to support People with developmental disabilities to live safe, happy, and fulfilled lives in their communities with the support of their communities.

Thank you for accepting our testimony. For additional questions, I can be reached at [pmoore@opra.org](mailto:pmoore@opra.org) or 614-224-6772.

Peter Moore  
President and CEO  
Ohio Provider Resource Association