

Proponent Testimony on HB33

House Finance Subcommittee on Health and Human Services

Chairwoman Carruthers, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the House Finance Subcommittee on Health and Human Services, thank you for reviewing this testimony on HB33. My name is Kevin Hannahs and I am the Executive Director of The Society for Equal Access.

I am submitting this testimony to discuss the potential impact of the request for increased funding in the Centers for Independent Living in my community. Our center serves eight counties with the comprehensive services of Centers for Independent Living.

If the funding is increased, our Center will see a direct increase in funding to serve the disability community in our region. We have the potential to expand in the following areas and way:

- Our agency cover an eight County region in rural southeastern Ohio. We lack the funding to assist with the region wide problem of adequate accessible housing. Individuals are sometimes forced to enter a more restricted environment such as assisted living or a nursing facility. Funding to provide home modification for individual to make their homes safe and accessible will help individual to live more independently in their communities and save. Not only will this reduce costs to insurance companies and Medicaid/Medicare, it will also help individuals live in their home of choice.
- Transportation in much needed service in our region as well. Many individuals in our region “fall through the cracks and are unable to afford specialized transportation on a self-pay basis, which often results with individuals unable to get to medical appointments and other destination. Funding to assist with the cost of transportation will help individuals to live in their homes of choice.

This funding will be vital to the services we offer in our region, and we appreciate your support.

Respectfully,

Kevin Hannahs,

Director, Society for Equal Access