

Lauren Griffen
House Finance Subcommittee on Health and Human Services
Interested Party Testimony, HB 33
March 15, 2023

Chairperson Carruthers, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the House Finance Subcommittee on Health and Human services, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 33.

I have Cerebral Palsy; I am 63 years old. I, live by myself (with my cat) in my own home. I am on My Care Ohio/ Ohio Buckeye/Department of Aging. I have no family locally, and depend on my home health aides to help me do for all my activities of daily living. They come in twice a day, seven days a week. Without these providers, my life would stop, and I would be forced into a nursing home.

In my forty plus years of having caregivers, I have never seen such a shortage of caregivers that is why I am speaking out. There is an home care crisis. Ohio Department of Medicaid and the Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) need to raise wages now for direct care workers so people with disabilities who need caregivers can find them. So, we can live our lives with independence and dignity.

My team of aides is entirely precarious. I'm able to find people but I'm not able to keep them because they move onto jobs with higher wages and a simpler and shorter hiring process, even though they like me and their job duties.

People should not be able to make more per hour at a fast-food restaurant than they do working in home care. Since Covid, agencies don't have workers and independent providers can't pick up any more cases because they are already working.

The reason I have my aides now is I found them myself and got them hired through an agency. I have 2 aides working more hours than they really want because of their low wage and they don't want me to have to go to a nursing home.

In summary, I want HB 33 to give home care workers a higher wage so that caregivers will stay in home care and more people will look for jobs in home care. So, I am able to stay in my home.

I, respectfully thank Chairperson Carruthers, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the House Finance Subcommittee on Health and Human services, again for the opportunity to submit my written only testimony to the committee today.

Sincerely,

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