

June 11, 2024

The Honorable Bill Roemer,  
Chairman Ways and Means Committee  
Ohio House  
1 Capitol Square  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony on House Bill 405. Catholic Charities, Diocese of Cleveland wanted to provide you this written testimony because we strongly support this legislation. HB 405 would offer much needed support some of our most vulnerable neighbors and their families, a population that according to a 2022 National Disability Institute study, were more than twice as likely to live in poverty (26% vs. 11.5%).

Catholic Charities has had a long history of serving people with disabilities within the 8 county region of the Diocese of Cleveland. Since 1966 Catholic Charities Disability Services & Ministries has offered persons with disabilities opportunities and resources to live life to their potential and to participate fully not just in Church but throughout society in general.

Through our Disability Services & Ministries Office, we provide educational, spiritual, social and recreational programs. Some of the programs and ministries include summer camp, adult education, socials and dances, interpretive services, audio description/enhancement, religious education, and pastoral care. We also provide residential living facilities for children and adults, early childhood education, respite care, supported employment, and day activity centers.

We know from our decades of working with these individuals and their families that the government and social service agencies like ourselves cannot cover all of the needs of those living with a disability. Families take on the vast majority of the care and financial burden for their family members who live with a disability.

To support these families, we fully support and strongly advocate for passage of House Bill 405. This tax credit is a simple yet profound way of showing support to a very vulnerable part of our population. In our services and ministries, we have found that households with persons with disabilities incur higher expenses than the average household, and are more likely to live in poverty. This income tax credit is a method to help level the playing field for persons with disabilities. We encourage the Committee and the entire House to join in our tagline of Providing Help, Creating Hope and Serving All by supporting House Bill 405.