

Dawn Lavey, ACF (Adult Care Facility) Home Operator

Ohio Adult Care Facilities Association Board Member

HB 33 336 510 Residential State Supplement

Governor DeWine's Budget made great strides in the funding of much needed mental health services. The amended House version of the Budget Bill for FY 24-23 (HB 33) is disappointing with the cuts to the Governor's proposed budget. One of the most disappointing cuts in HB 33 was the removal of the increase for the Residential State Supplement that supplements and provides housing for hundreds of Ohioans living with mental illnesses. We are pleading for the Senate to return to the Executive Budget's as-introduced allocation amounts for the **336 510 Residential State Supplement** line at \$24,000,000 per year which equates to a proposed \$1,600 per month versus the current \$1,100 per month. The lack of housing is at crisis level and mental health group homes have not seen an increase in funding for **over 7 years**. We see an increase in demand for group homes as more and more homes close due to inadequate funding and the group home operators are faced with a heavier financial burden in today's economy.

My name is Dawn. I own 2 RSS group homes in Lancaster about 30 miles southeast of here. 365 days a year for the last 31 years my staff and I have been providing caring structured housing and support to individuals with mental illness. Every day we purchase, prepare, and serve all meals, assist with activities of daily living, supervise self-administration of medication, coordinate and transport all of my 22 residents to their medical, psychiatric, financial and social appointments. The current RSS rate is insufficient at a daily rate of less than \$37 to cover all of these services. I am at risk of having to close my homes if the proposed RSS rate is not put back in the budget by the Senate.

Just within the last 8 years, Fairfield County has experienced the loss of 7 RSS homes. I am now the only RSS provider in Lancaster. Every week I have to tell desperate caseworkers, physicians, hospitals, mental health professionals, and families that I do not have any openings in my RSS homes to care for their loved ones with mental illness. I am at a loss! Please tell me what I should tell my 22 residents who suffer from schizophrenia, bipolar, autism, schizoaffective, epilepsy, traumatic brain injury, and Moya Moya brain disease if you choose not to put 336 510 back in the budget? They are my family, and I am theirs. Please help. They need us.

Thank you for all that you do on behalf of all Ohioans.

Dawn