



For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

Senate Finance Committee Testimony

H.B. 33

Gary Tonks, President/CEO

The Arc of Ohio

June 8, 2023

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Chair Dolan, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Sykes and Members of the Senate Finance Committee, my name is Gary Tonks. I am the President/CEO of The Arc of Ohio. The Arc is Ohio's oldest and largest grassroots civil rights organization representing our citizens with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families.

The Arc was instrumental in the establishment of virtually every support for Ohioans with I/DD. I have been an active member for almost 50 years supporting and representing our most vulnerable citizens and their families. I am an extended family member myself and on behalf of our almost 100,000 citizens supported by the Department of Developmental Disabilities and our 88 County Boards of DD and the thousands of Ohioans yet to be supported, THANK YOU!

Your budget recommendation to increase wages for our direct support staff will provide the much needed assistance in recruitment and retention of staff that are there when our families cannot be. You are making it possible for someone who cannot dress themselves, to be dressed; and, for someone who cannot feed themselves to be fed. You are helping people learn to bathe themselves and live and work in their communities across our state. You are lessening the stress of our families and helping keep families together and strong. Thank you.

And Thank You also to our local partners, our 88 County Boards of Developmental Disabilities and their staff, who work with us in the support of our loved ones and our families and have pledged financial support to raise direct support salaries.

The Developmental Disabilities support network is a family. It is a family of Ohioans with developmental disabilities, family members, advocates, providers, counties boards and You.

You have made a difference in the lives of thousands with this budget.

I am available to answer any questions you may have.