



For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Hudson and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

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Northeast Regional Office

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Southwest Regional Office

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Northwest Regional Office

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My name is Jen Powers Alge and I am a Regional Director at The Arc of Ohio. I advocate for people with disabilities and their families in Southwest Ohio. I have two children with developmental disabilities myself. My son, Jack, has autism and epilepsy and my daughter, Evie, has Down syndrome. I am an attorney and have found that my passion lies in public policy and advocacy for people with disabilities and caregivers like me.

The Arc of Ohio is a grassroots organization which advocates for human rights, personal dignity and community participation of individuals with developmental disabilities through legislative and social action, information and education, local chapter support, and family involvement.

The Arc of Ohio is in support of Senate Bill 213 which establishes the presumption that adults with developmental disabilities are capable of making their own decisions about their lives. Supported decision-making is the process of supporting and accommodating adults living with developmental disabilities who are making, communicating and implementing their own life decisions without impeding their self-determination. These individualized plans are utilized by people with disabilities and their chosen supporters to structure plans for how to make daily and long-term decisions regarding, but not limited to medical treatment, Medicaid, employment, education, and finances.

For a long time, people with disabilities have been establishing supported decision-making plans with people that they have chosen to help support them. Everyone needs support and people with disabilities are especially skilled at finding the people in their lives who can help support and accommodate their choices. We believe these plans give people with developmental disabilities and their families the structure they need to feel safe and thriving in their communities.

In Ohio, we help people with disabilities by providing early intervention, support and accommodations in school. This Bill is for the transition into adulthood and beyond. Transition into adulthood can be a particularly difficult time for a person with a disability and their family, unless they have a plan. This Bill defines an alternative to guardianship and will allow families to continue to support their loved one with a disability well into adulthood without taking away their deserved autonomy.

The Arc of Ohio is proud to support this bill and encourages you and all members to pass this important legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jen Powers Alge
Regional Director
The Arc of Ohio
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