**[NAME]**

Proponent Testimony on House Bill 427

Ohio House Government Oversight

**[DATE]**

Chair Peterson, Ranking Member Humphrey, and members of the House Government Oversight Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 427 (HB 427) the Ohio Employment First and Greater Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities Act. **[PROVIDE NAME AND WHERE YOU ARE FROM]**

I applaud the sponsors, Representative Jarrells and Representative Lipps, of this necessary and important piece of legislation. HB 427 would, after a five (5) year implementation period, prohibit employers from paying people with disabilities subminimum wage. A practice that violates an individual’s civil rights, conflicts with self-determination, and does not prepare people with disabilities to gain competitive integrated employment in their communities.

Subminimum wage was a practice created in 1938 under section 14c of the Fair Labor Standards Act. The goal was to provide supportive services for people with disabilities while also receiving a wage. Although the original aim of the legislation was admirable, the use of 14c certificates and the paying of subminimum wage has been used to exploit workers with disabilities and subject them to a lifetime of underpaid labor often in segregated settings. As few as only 5% of workers actual transition into competitive integrated employment.

**[PERSONAL STORY ON WHY YOU SUPPORT THIS BILL, HOW SUBMINIMUM WAGE HAS IMPACTED YOUR LIFE, AND/OR WHY MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT IN THE COMMUNITY IS IMPORTANT]**

Paying subminimum wage assumes people are incapable of being fully integrated into the general workforce, a notion that is at odds with the disability policy that has emerged over the past forty (40) years. Since the inception of subminimum wage, amendments to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Developmental Bill of Rights and Assistance Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (to name a few) have passed expanding rights for people with disabilities. It is time Ohio act and eliminate this antiquated policy.

**[PROVIDE ADDITIONAL VIEW ON WHY YOU THINK SUBMINIMUM WAGE NEEDS TO BE ELIMINATED]**

Thank you again for opportunity to provide testimony in consideration of HB 427, [**IF TESTIFYING IN PERSON]** I am happy to take questions from the committee.