

State of Ohio Report

Ohio State Co-coordinators: Harris Capps and Caroline Lahrmann

1. Our Support to the 2021 VOR (Virtual) Capitol Hill Legislative Initiative:

Harris Capps (Southern Ohio) and Tom Gilbert (Northern Ohio) had discussions with the following Legislative Aides or Congresspersons:

#	Date Completed	Senator or Representative	Legislative Aide
1	5/17/2021	Rep. Bob Lata	Paul Hartman
2	5/17/2021	Rep. Jim Jordan	Marshal Macheledt
3	5/17/2021	Sen. Portman	Seth Gold
4	5/18/2021	Rep. Steve Chabot	Ian Mercer
5	5/18/2021	Rep. Troy Balderson	Davis Michols
6	5/18/2021	Rep. Anthony Gonzalez	Max Sivik
7	6/2/2021	Rep. David Joyce	Burke Smith
8	6/4/2021	Rep. Warren Davidson*	Zack Smith
9	6/10/2021	Sen. Sherrod Brown	Alea Brown-Hoffmeister

* Regarding Representative Warren, we talked with his legislative Aide and the next day talked directly to him in a “Town Hall Meeting”.

The discussions started with a brief overview of VOR, our focused disability population, etc. It then covered:

- The (then draft) HR Bill, the HCBS Access Act and its adverse effects on Intermediate Care Facilities (ICFs). Since these meetings the draft Bills have just become, **“HR 4131 - To amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to expand access to home and community-based services (HCBS) under Medicaid, and for other purposes”**.
- The **draft American Jobs Plan** and its adverse effects on ICF Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) and Intermediate Care Facilities (ICFs)
- The Raise the Wage Act (H.R. 603 and S. 53) and Transformation to Competitive Integrated Employment Act (H.R. 2373) both would phase out Vocational Work Centers (AKA, “Sheltered workshops”).

Ohio has 87,262 people in HCBS settings and 5,047 people in ICFs. Another 1,618 persons with Intellectual and developmental; disabilities (I/DD) reside in either correctional facilities or nursing homes.

Ohio has approximately 75 “Sheltered workshops” (note: The Dept. of Labor’s figures are not correct leading us to have to approximate).

There are in excess of 1,300 “Sheltered Workshops in the U.S. (again, note: The Dept. of Labor’s figures are not correct leading us to have to approximate).

2. Ohio families received a win from the U.S. District Court of the Southern District of Ohio which allowed DD families claims against the State of Ohio to move forward for failure to inform families of the ICF choice and to adequately fund the ICF option. We continue to press for a resolution of the case so that all Ohioans with DD have the opportunity to choose between an ICF or waive an ICF placement to seek community services.

3. Ohio families have been supportive of an amendment in the Ohio budget that would establish a committee of the state legislature to hear testimony from DD families on the protection & advocacy system for individuals with DD once every two years. At the present time, the budget bill is being negotiated in conference committee. Ohio’s P&A has aggressively attacked the rights of individuals who require intensive supports filing a class action to close ICFs in 2016 and more recently meeting with ICF residents without their guardian present to encourage them to leave the ICF. Many families are outraged by these actions.