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Charles Arndt
PUBLIC POLICY IMPACTS
OF WASHINGTON, DC & NEW YORK LLC
46 Kinsale Court
Wappingers Falls, NY 12590

Dear Charles:

While reading your latest proposal to help persons with Developmental Disabilities become employed, I was reminded of the many, many instances over the past 36 years when you and I collaborated to bring about changes in Ohio Laws to the benefit of such persons.

Beginning back in the late eighties you helped write new law with Senator Grace Drake and my staff under S.B. 155 that changed the employment status of professionals employed by Boards of DD, so that we could hire based upon qualifications, and not political "test" scores. We also worked together to make changes in the Ohio Revised Code that equalized subsidies from the State of Ohio for children enrolled in programs for Developmentally Disabled school-age children with subsidies for able-bodied so-called, "normal" kids in other public schools. This single action resulted in many multi-millions of dollars being directed to our programs where for many years the State had simply ignored or marginalized such kids.

We also worked together to change the laws regarding local Board's ability to own real-estate, and such other essentials like school busses. We also got the laws changed to require persons employed to work with kids with Developmental Disabilities to meet the same professional degree requirements as other teachers, thus professionalizing the entire program in one fell swoop.

You also succeeded in getting the laws changed to incorporate the “Cuyahoga Model” for residential development into law, thus separating property ownership from program supports for the first time in the nation. Our model for Supported Living is still alive and doing well in Ohio and elsewhere. In fact Ohio leads the nation in the use of this model and has implemented with near perfection for a wide range of individuals.

Of course it’s not possible to accurately count the millions in public support dollars local Boards of Developmental Disabilities have received from the Federal Government through the Medicaid program, when heretofore persons being assisted were excluded from the State Plan and Medicaid waivers in Ohio. In 2000, I came to you to let you know of the serious financial difficulties boards were having making ends meet the demand. You proposed and got enacted the Medicaid Refinancing proposal under H.B. 94 and 405 in 2001 that gave access to Medicaid waivers for thousands of people and resulted in boards having access to over \$500 million of new federal monies. Clearly, that assisted us all in balancing our budgets, expanding services and meeting more needs of the people we entrusted in supporting.

But, then I could go on and on about the many other legislative triumphs you helped us to achieve while you and I worked together here in Ohio.

I truly miss those days, and look forward to joining you in a future endeavor to continue our quest for equality for persons with Developmental Disabilities.

I remain,

Yours, truly,

Michael A. Donzella, Ed.D.
President,