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For Immediate Release

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### **DD Leaders Calls For Governor Kasich and the Ohio Legislature To Protect Ohio's Developmental Disabilities System**

Columbus, OH- Two lead organizations of Ohio's Developmental Disabilities (DD) System: The Arc of Ohio and The Ohio Provider Resource Association (OPRA) expressed appreciation to the Governor's Administration and the Ohio Legislature for their commitment in support of individuals with developmental disabilities and the system that supports them.

OPRA and The Arc of Ohio hope that collaborative discussions in the Sub. H.B. 49 Conference Committee support the DODD budget as passed by the Senate and protect the DODD budget from further cuts. In this time of a severe direct care workforce shortage, DODD budget cuts would be devastating to Ohioans with intellectual and developmental disabilities, families, providers and our entire developmental disabilities system.

"We all genuinely appreciate the continued willingness of the Governor, his administration and the Legislature to address the long-standing policy and funding issues in Ohio's Developmental Disabilities (DD) System" says Mark Davis, President of OPRA. "Collectively they have been able to successfully identify targeted needs in our system and creatively address them. However, with direct support professional turnover exceeding 50%, further cuts in the DD system would be devastating to individuals with DD, their families, providers and county boards."

"We are all dependent on each other to ensure that people with DD have quality lives. Our system is in a fragile state now. Families are struggling with finding agency and independent providers to care for their loved ones. Agencies are increasingly unable to find and retain qualified staff. We commend the Ohio Legislature and Governor Kasich and his team for their efforts to support our system's efforts to support people with DD. However, we simply cannot sustain any additional reductions in funding and ask that our system's funding remain intact" says Gary Tonks, CEO, The Arc of Ohio.

The Arc of Ohio, OACB and OPRA will work with the administration, legislature and system stakeholders to ensure the effective and efficient application and implementation of the DD budget initiatives.