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Written Testimony

from the Ohio Academy of Family Physicians
to the House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee

Proponent Testimony in Support of HB 145

Chairman Blessing and members of the House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee. My name is Dr. Ryan Kauffman and I am the President of the Ohio Academy of Family Physicians. Our organization, representing 4,900 family physician, family medicine resident and medical students in Ohio, strongly supports House Bill 145, a proposal to establish a confidential program to treat impaired licensees of the State Medical Board.

Over the past year, the Ohio Academy of Family Physicians has worked with other medical associations and the State Medical Board to develop the provisions of House Bill 145. We strongly support confidential access to high-quality addiction treatment through a state physicians' health program so that physicians who need treatment, get that treatment at the earliest possible time. The sooner treatment is sought, the better. Fear of disciplinary action by the State Medical Board can delay a practitioner from seeking needed treatment. The availability of a confidential reporting system and treatment program encourages people to seek treatment sooner. This confidential program, authorized through HB 145, would be available to practitioners who would qualify under strict conditions.

House Bill 145 creates a system whereby practitioners have a safe opportunity to get the help that they need. House Bill 145 makes it so physicians can seek confidential treatment at the earliest possible moment so patients aren't put at risk and physicians, after treatment, can return to practice healthy and better able to serve their patients.

The Ohio Academy of Family Physicians enthusiastically supports House Bill 145 as a positive and much-needed piece of legislation.

Respectively submitted,



Ryan D. Kauffman, MD
President
Ohio Academy of Family Physicians