



DAVE YOST

OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

October 3, 2019

Chairman George Lang
House Criminal Justice Committee
77 South High Street, 13th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Lang,

I write today to offer my support for Senate Bill 55, which enhances penalties for drug offenses near community addiction services providers.

Currently Ohio's aggravated drug trafficking law allows for two factors which can increase a drug trafficking penalty by a single degree: if the offense is committed near a school or if committed in the vicinity of a juvenile. This well intentioned law unfortunately fails to protect an additional vulnerable class – those who are seeking treatment for their addiction. Should Senate Bill 55 not be adopted into law, drug dealers will continue to trap recovering addicts in an unending cycle of addiction.

Senate Bill 55 would enhance penalties for those who are convicted of aggravated drug trafficking on or within 1,000 feet of a community addiction service provider. The language enhances a felony by one degree up to a felony of the first degree based on the amount of the drug present for the following drugs: schedule I/II drugs, cocaine, LSD, hashish, controlled substance analogs, or a fentanyl-related compound. Senate Bill 55 takes a necessary step to aid law enforcement in protecting recovering addicts and their families.

I commend Senator Theresa Gavarone for her leadership on this issue and for bringing this bill before this committee. I am happy to discuss this issue with you or any members of the committee at your convenience.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dave Yost".

Dave Yost
Ohio Attorney General