



To: Ohio House Finance Committee

Fr: Monica Hueckel, Senior Director of Government Relations, Ohio State Medical Association

Da: May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019

Re: Sub-HB 166, Main Operating Budget FY 2020- FY 2021

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On behalf of the 16,000 physician, resident, and medical student members of the Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA), I am writing to express the OSMA's serious concerns about several major health-care related policy initiatives that were added to the substitute version of HB 166.

Language was added to the bill related to out-of-network insurance coverage, while the OSMA is very committed to working on and addressing this issue, we cannot support the language included in the bill. We have met with dozens of elected officials about this issue over the past several months and have draft legislation we are currently working on that will address the issue in a way that protects patients and is fair to providers and insurers. The language included in sub-HB 166 is vastly different from the language we have been working on, and thus we request this language be removed from the bill. This issue is one that deserves a full debate and should be properly vetted through the entire legislative process, not added to the state budget without any physician input.

The OSMA has also been committed to legislation dealing with price transparency in the health care industry for several years now. We have offered numerous proposals, amendments and bill drafts that would make Ohio a leader in this area and we currently have legislation pending in the state senate, SB 97. We respectfully request the language that was added to the sub-bill dealing with this issue to be removed. This is also an issue that deserves a full debate and should not be part of the state budget.

There are several other large policy initiatives that were added to the bill without input from the physician community regarding free standing ERs, facility fees, Medicaid payment rates for emergency medical services, and other issues. We feel strongly that these and the above mentioned items deserve a comprehensive, thoughtful, and deliberative legislative process and request they all be removed from the bill.

Lastly, we are extremely disappointed that language regarding coverage for telemedicine services was removed from the bill. Ohio is behind 35 other states who have passed laws regarding insurance coverage for telemedicine services and it is very unfortunate that opponents of this language have painted a picture that makes some believe telemedicine will increase health care costs. Telemedicine will do the exact opposite; it will save money, provide better access for patients and will bring Ohio in line with the majority of states around the country who are already benefiting from the use of telemedicine.

I appreciate your attention to these issues and the opportunity to comment on the budget proposal. Should you care to discuss these matters further, please feel free to contact me.