

House Health Committee  
May 28, 2019  
Angela Newman-White  
Cuyahoga County Board of Health

Chairman Merrin, Ranking Member Boyd, and Members of the House Health Committee,

Good morning, my name is Angela Newman-White and I'm from the Cuyahoga County Board of Health. I am here today to testify in support of HB 11.

First, allow me to thank Co-Sponsors Manning and Howse for bringing forward this important bill. We are grateful to the leadership of both caucuses for recognizing the essential nature of the work to combat infant and maternal mortality in the state. We support all four elements of HB 11-smoking cessation, dental hygiene, lead education, and group pre-natal care.

Today, I would like to highlight the positive impacts of these strategies. Infant mortality is a strategic priority for the Cuyahoga County Board of Health which has translated into to comprehensive coordinated efforts within our organization that include policy and systems changes, the provision of direct services, and ongoing data collection and analysis. Black women in Cuyahoga County are four times more likely to lose their baby than white women, regardless of level of income, validating that community conditions, skin color, and discriminatory practices that impact access to quality healthcare, housing, jobs, and education all influence a woman's opportunity to have a healthy pregnancy and birth outcome.

CCBH has served as primary lead of the local Ohio Equity Institute team; a state wide effort charged with implemented data driven, evidence based interventions to improve birth outcomes for African American women. One of the initial strategies was to increase our community's capacity to provide CenteringPregnancy, an evidence based group prenatal care model. Group prenatal care programs, like CenteringPregnancy, have proven better outcomes than traditional care. Cuyahoga County is fortunate to have three large hospital systems and four federally qualified health centers that provide prenatal care, but was only offering the model at 2 locations. With the current reimbursement structure, clinical systems face challenges to implement these models of care. Since 2014, with the support of the Ohio Department of Health, March of Dimes, and the Ohio Department of Medicaid, the model is now offered through all systems and at multiple locations within each system, increasing the opportunity for women to take advantage of this experience. HB-11 will continue to provide support to existing programs and also opportunities for new group prenatal care models to become available. It is our intent to designate CenteringPregnancy as the standard of prenatal across our county.

The Cuyahoga County Board of Health's Child Fatality Review notes tobacco exposure in over 60% of sleep related deaths. We have traditionally advocated to families the ABC's of safe sleep: alone, on their back, in a crib. In 2018, we have added a "D" for don't smoke. HB-11 will

increase the number of resources available to families, thus reducing a number of health risks in addition to the risk of experiencing a sleep related death.

Children continue to be exposed to lead at alarming rates in some communities within our county. Between 2014-2016, over 23% of children screened in the city of East Cleveland had elevated blood lead level ( $> 5 \mu\text{g}/\text{dl}$ ) and 7.45% screened twice as high ( $> 10 \mu\text{g}/\text{dl}$ ). Ensuring families are aware of the impact of lead exposure and offering strategies to minimize exposure will serve as a protective factor for lead poisoning. CCBH has been working with communities on lead abatement strategies since 1999. To date we have assisted 1,810 home owners to remove lead from their homes. HB-11 will further assist communities like ours to ensure that families informed and empowered around lead exposure.

A comprehensive plan as presented in HB-11 will provide our communities opportunities to bring valuable resources and services to women and families. Again, thank you for working on this important topic, and I would be happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully,

Angela Newman-White  
Cuyahoga County Board of Health.