

House Health Committee
May 28, 2019
Horace Highland
Centering Healthcare Institute

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

Good morning, my name is Horace Highland, I'm a resident of Cleveland, OH and I'm a Regional Director for Centering Healthcare Institute. 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 prenatal care.

Today, I would like to discuss why group prenatal care programs such as CenteringPregnancy are so important to my community.

As you have already heard, CenteringPregnancy is an evidence-based model of group prenatal care that has been shown to significantly reduce preterm birth, a leading cause of infant mortality in Ohio.

Centering Healthcare Institute (CHI) is the national accrediting organization for healthcare practices that use the CenteringPregnancy care model. We advise and train healthcare practices on how to provide CenteringPregnancy care. Our accreditation process ensures their practice conforms with the evidence-based model. We believe having independent 3rd party accreditation is an important value add for the state's multi-million-dollar investment proposed in HB11.

CHI has extensive experience collaborating with state health departments to structure programs to expand patient access to CenteringPregnancy. In South Carolina we worked with that state's Birth Outcomes Initiative to grow from 2 locations to 27 locations between 2012 and 2017. In partnership with New York City Dept of Health and Mental Hygiene we are currently rolling out new CenteringPregnancy programs in boroughs with high rates of infant mortality. We are also working with both the New York State Dept of Health and New Jersey Dept of Health on initiatives to reduce black maternal and infant mortality through expanding access to CenteringPregnancy care. Additionally, we are supporting CenteringPregnancy sites in Georgia who are taking part in a state Medicaid pilot testing the impact of enhanced reimbursement for group prenatal care.

CHI is fully committed to the success of CenteringPregnancy in Ohio and continues to invest heavily here. We started our first CenteringPregnancy practice here in 2008. Over the 10 years since we have grown our network to include 44 practices which ranks Ohio among the top states in the country alongside Texas, California and New York. As CHI's Regional Director here

in Ohio, I work closely with the First Year Cleveland, Cradle Cincinnati and other important stakeholders working to improve maternal and infant birth outcomes. CHI has just recently hired a new consultant - trainer who will be starting with us in June and located here in Ohio. University Hospitals is named as a Centering Regional Leadership Partner, one of only two facilities in the country that have received this designation.

Again, thank you for working on this important topic., and I would be happy to answer any questions. CHI looks forward to working with the committee, the sponsors, and the implementing agencies to ensure that this significant investment in the health of mothers and babies in Ohio is successful and sustainable. And I would be happy to answer any questions.