



Representative Don Manning
59th Ohio House District

HB 12 Sponsor Testimony

Chair Merrin, Ranking Member Boyd, and members of the House Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on HB 12, which creates the Ohio Children's Behavioral Health Network.

Having worked in juvenile detention/probation and as a compliance analyst for a non-profit that provides mental health, behavioral health, and addiction services, I have seen firsthand the need for reform in these areas. So many of the issues we face when it comes to mental and behavioral health in Ohio stem from adolescence, which is why the stakeholder group that this legislation puts together is so essential.

One in five children live with mental illness, and 50% of all lifetime mental illness starts by age 14. Mental health treatment is not only expensive but also often not completely effective. Preventing mental health disorders is much more cost-effective than their treatment, and prevention becomes even more effective when focused on young children in the formative stages of social, emotional, and behavioral development.

HB 12 will allow us to focus directly on prevention. The stakeholder group that it creates will coordinate and plan the creation of a comprehensive learning network to support young children and their families and facilitate social, emotional, and behavioral development. The group will be made up of the Director of the Governor's Children's Initiatives, the Director of Health, Director of Mental Health and Addiction, Director of Medicaid, the Superintendent of Public Education, and members selected from the Ohio Children's Hospital Association, Ohio Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Federally Qualified Health Centers, Primary and Secondary Schools, and Community Behavioral Health Service Providers.

I wholeheartedly believe that this stakeholder group will be able to collaborate to create a comprehensive report that will ensure children's behavioral health needs are met long before the problem reaches a critical level.

I would like to thank you again for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on this essential piece of legislation and now turn it over to my joint-sponsor, Representative West, to speak.

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