
Prevention Action Alliance

Lifetime Prevention | Lifetime Wellness

Ohio House of Representatives Health Committee Prevention Action Alliance June 4, 2019

Good morning, Chairman Merrin, Vice Chairman Manning, Ranking Member Boyd, and members of the House Health Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony as a proponent in consideration of House Bill 10 (“HB 10”) a bill to establish a Governor’s Office of Drug Policy. My name is Jean-Philippe Dorval and I am the Manager of Legislative Affairs and Administrative Services at Prevention Action Alliance (PAA). PAA is a 30-year-old statewide nonprofit and certified Prevention Partner with the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS). Based in Columbus, Ohio, we are dedicated to leading healthy communities in the prevention of alcohol, tobacco, and other substance misuse as well as the promotion of mental health wellness. PAA offers a wealth of resources, training services, grants, and advocacy opportunities for those who are active in the prevention and mental health fields.

There are many in the field of substance misuse prevention who have said that Ohio has never seen the level of understanding and attention that prevention and the entire behavioral health field has received recently. This is partly due to the work that the General Assembly has done regarding the state’s addiction crisis, and is also partly due to the governor’s leadership in this space.

This bill is yet another example of the state’s growing commitment to helping those who suffer from addiction. There are many promising aspects within this bill that we as an organization are happy to support. The coordination of quarterly reports and stakeholder meetings will help bolster the state’s infrastructure in how we track the progress and success of our drug related efforts and will also increase the knowledge and understanding of these efforts among our public officials.

The creation of a hotline and resource database will allow the public to easily access information, greatly reducing barriers to access and knowledge about resources and programs throughout the state to help with addiction treatment and prevention.

Lastly, the impact of the \$ 5.5-million appropriation in this bill should not be understated. It is an investment that will elevate our work to another level by increasing our reach, building our workforce, and strengthening our outcomes.

As a prevention advocate, I can attest to the need for a well-known entity to help coordinate all the great drug-related efforts that are happening in the various parts of our state and implement the changes and initiatives that have been recommended within the last year.

The Office of Drug Policy will be the piece that ties all of our hard work together, something that we in the prevention field have been wanting for quite some time. The office will not only serve as an informational hub but will also function as a beacon of hope. The efforts of the governor and the General Assembly in this space has been phenomenal and we would like to see these efforts remain strong for many years to come.

Thank you once again for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 10 and I am happy to answer any questions that the committee may have.