



## **Ohio House Health Committee**

Written Testimony on SB 59

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Chairman Lipps, Ranking Member Boyd, and members of the House Health Committee, thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony on Senate Bill 59. My name is Cheri Walter and I am the CEO of the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities. We represent Ohio's Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health Boards.

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 59. This proposal to require the State Board of Pharmacy to develop a program to educate its license holders and other about the authority of pharmacists and pharmacy interns to dispense naloxone without a prescription is an important part of our ongoing work to address the opioid epidemic.

As we collectively work to address the opioid epidemic and continue our efforts to ensure that every Ohioan is able to access a continuum of prevention, treatment, and support services for any substance use disorder, we must also look for new avenues to provide resources and education. We believe this proposal represents a positive step in educating pharmacists and others licensed by the Ohio Board of Pharmacy about the current law related to dispensing naloxone along with other useful tools for maintaining and stocking naloxone.

Pharmacists are trusted healthcare professionals and individuals often rely on their guidance. As such, pharmacists are often in a key position to help an individual experiencing an opioid use disorder and/or those at risk of an overdose. This proposal would provide critical education about the authority of pharmacists and pharmacy interns to dispense naloxone without a prescription. This education could help increase the number of pharmacies across Ohio who adopt and implement a protocol to furnish naloxone without a prescription to individuals in need.

Collectively, we must continue to work together across all sectors of healthcare and throughout our communities to ensure that we have robust, informed responses to addiction. We know that treatment works and people recover. When we all come together to help support our community members, we can promote recovery and make a positive impact on the lives of our citizens, their families, and our communities.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony. Should you have any questions, please contact me at (614)224-1111.