

To: Members of the House Health & Aging Committee
Fr: Tim Maglione, JD, Sr. Director, Ohio State Medical Association
Marisa Weisel, MPH, Manager, Ohio State Medical Association
Da: May 13, 2015
Re: Support for Senate Bill 121

On behalf of the 20,000 physician, resident, and medical student members of the Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA), we write in support of Senate Bill 121, legislation that would protect children from contracting meningococcal infections by establishing a new meningococcal vaccination requirement.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), around 1,000-1,200 people get meningococcal infections each year. These infections are very serious and often cause death and severe disability. While anyone can get a meningococcal infection, the disease is most frequently contracted by infants and people between the ages of 16 and 21. Meningococcal immunizations are the best defense we have against meningococcal disease.

Senate Bill 121 would require the Ohio Department of Health to specify an age at which students should be immunized against meningococcal disease. The bill would put a meningococcal vaccination requirement in place for those students at the start of the 2016 school year. Our physician members strongly support this new immunization requirement, as well as ongoing efforts to increase overall vaccination rates among Ohio schoolchildren. We commend Senator Hite for introducing this important legislation, which passed the Senate with overwhelming bipartisan support.

We appreciate your consideration of the OSMA's views on Senate Bill 121. Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have regarding this legislation

Sincerely,



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