

Testimony before the House Health and Aging Committee  
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Thank you Chair Gonzales and members of the House Health and Aging Committee for allowing AICUO to submit written testimony on behalf of Ohio's independent, nonprofit colleges and universities in support of Senate Bill 121.

AICUO represents 51 nonprofit institutions of higher education in our state. Our members educate 134,000 students, and award one third of the baccalaureate degrees in Ohio each year, and even higher shares of our state's degrees in mathematics, natural and biological sciences, and other key areas of study.

Senate Bill 121 requires the Department of Health to determine a recommended age for compulsory immunization against meningococcal disease.

Ohio's independent colleges and universities go to great lengths to foster a safe and secure environment for all of their students, many of whom are just leaving home for the first time.

According to the Center for Disease Control there are between 600 and 1,000 cases of meningococcal disease every year. Sadly, this disease can spread rapidly through close contact, especially among people who share a room or live in the same household.

Meningococcal disease is a devastating, deadly and quick-moving disease that can become life threatening within 48 hours. By requiring that all students be vaccinated before arriving on campus, Ohio will ensure that no student is placed at unnecessary risk of tragedy.

We thank Senator Hite for his leadership on this issue and hope to help create even safer campuses and communities in Ohio.