



November 16, 2016

Chairman Sprague, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the House Finance Health and Human Services Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of SB 332. While local communities have increased their attention on the unacceptable, high infant mortality rate we know that it will take a state-wide focus and infrastructure for improvements to be made and sustained. Nationwide Children's Hospital believes the recommendations set forth by the Ohio Commission on Infant Mortality and included in SB 332 will provide the needed framework and action steps necessary to reduce infant mortality rates and ensure more Ohio babies see their first birthday.

Nationwide Children's Hospital is part of the Ohio Better Birth Outcomes (OBBO) collaborative in Franklin County. The mission of OBBO is to reduce the infant mortality rate by improving the delivery of health care services for women and their families using quality improvement science to guide our work. OBBO consists of four hospital systems in the community, as well as the Columbus Public Health Department and PrimaryOne Health Centers.

OBBO is one of the lead organizations of CelebrateOne, our community's collective impact initiative to reduce infant mortality. OBBO is focused on three key CelebrateOne initiatives:

- Improving reproductive health
- Expanding access to prenatal care
- Enhancing clinical quality initiatives to help reduce prematurity

SB 332 directly aligns with the work we are doing to improve spacing between births, ensuring that barriers are eliminated for women in need of early and ongoing prenatal care and promoting the availability of progesterone to women who have had a previous preterm (spontaneous) birth. SB 332 will allow us to accelerate our efforts that will hopefully lead to reductions to infant deaths and prematurity in the upcoming years.

We commend the House Finance Health and Human Services Subcommittee with hosting testimony and working diligently to quickly move SB332 through the approval process. Please let our organization know if there is anything we can do to assure its passage.

Sincerely,

Alicia Leatherman, Director  
Infant Wellness/Community Wellness