



Written testimony in support of

Senate Bill 300

By

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As a result of the AOF public policy committee reviewing SB 300 and the AOF Steering Committee formally voting to partner with the other Ohio organizations to support SB 300, it is the position of Advocates for Ohio's Future that SB 300 should be adopted by the Ohio Legislature as soon as possible.

The conclusion reached by AOF is there is a real and serious problem:

THE PROBLEM: With the large numbers of Ohioans who are living in poverty there is a significant need to provide the care these individuals need as they struggle with providing for their families and themselves. As AOF discussed and considered the issues which impact Ohioans in poverty, one of the many hurdles identified is that those in poverty must overcome the negative emotional impact of seeing those they love and care for experiencing a lack of food, the need for medical care, having a safe home, and many of the other aspects of living which many of us take for granted every day. AOF is confident that having a good job and caring for yourself and your family is crucial to finding a way out of poverty. The mental anguish these mothers and fathers experience is significant. We hear the real stories of these individual struggles and stress. Pulling on a pair of boots as they start each day is minor in comparison to the haunting mental flashes and guilt many experience as they interact with those they love.

Patients often wait up to 3 months to see a prescriber for mental health medications. Many prescribers do not have training in psychotropic medications.

There is a shortage of mental health professionals in Ohio

72/88 counties have federally designated mental health shortage areas

1600 psychiatrists
3200 psychologists
400 psychiatric nurses

ONE PARITAL SOLUTION: SB 300

Purpose of SB 300: To increase the number of well-trained mental health professionals at no cost to Ohio taxpayers.

- Requires licensed psychologists be trained in a two year master's program which they pay for themselves.
- Requires supervised practicum or externships.
- Requires passing a comprehensive exam.
- Requires biennial certification and on-going continuing education.
- Requires consultation with physicians.

William Sundermeyer



Advocates for Ohio's Future Values, Mission & Goals

We Value

- **OHIO.** Ohio should be a great place for all Ohioans to live and work. Ohio's budget and public policy priorities can make Ohioans more competitive, create good jobs, increase opportunity for all Ohioans, and make Ohio's economy stronger.
- **COMMUNITY.** Healthy people build strong communities. Health, human services and early education benefit all Ohioans and are fundamental building blocks of healthy, thriving communities.
- **PEOPLE AND FAMILIES.** When people have essential human resources - things like food, housing, health care, education, child care and transportation - all Ohioans can live better lives.
- **PARTICIPATION.** Our members come from all walks of life across the state. Our diversity, our belief in democracy, and our efforts to find common ground make Advocates for Ohio's Future strong, credible, and durable. We are open to working with all who share our values.

Mission

Advocates for Ohio's Future promotes health and human service budget and policy solutions so that all Ohioans live better lives.

Goals

Advocates for Ohio's Future works to accomplish its mission by:

- **EDUCATING.** Raising awareness of how health, human services, and early education make Ohioans more competitive and build strong communities that are attractive to families and businesses.
- **COLLABORATING.** Building a statewide network of advocates to carry a unified message to influence the public, elected officials, and ultimately, budget and policy priorities.
- **ADVOCATING.** Advancing budget and public policy priorities that promote economic security and meet essential human needs, so all Ohioans can live better lives.

Advocates for Ohio's Future

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Advocates for Ohio's Future is a nonpartisan coalition of over 475 local and statewide organizations that promotes health and human service budget and policy solutions so that all Ohioans live better lives.