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Finance Committee

House Bill 556 Testimony
Representative Dan Ramos
November 13th, 2018

Chairman Ryan, Vice Chairman Lipps, Ranking Member Cera, and Members of the House Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 556, legislation to establish the Frances Lewandowski Memorial Medical Research Fund to provide funding for chronic, terminal, and incurable disease research.

As I am entering my final months in the legislature,

As you all know, I have been honored to serve the people of the 56th District for nearly 8 years now. In that time we, as a legislature, have introduced and/or passed legislation to bring awareness to the following diseases and conditions:

- Lupus
- Macular Degeneration
- Multiple System Atrophy
- Pain*
- Metastatic Breast Cancer
- Dyslexia
- Hemochromatosis
- Brain Injury
- HIV/AIDS
- ALS
- Complex regional pain syndrome
- Pediatric Stroke
- Primary Immunodeficiency
- Ovarian Cancer
- Dravet Syndrome
- Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome
- Parkinson's Disease
- Pancreatic Cancer
- Cystic Fibrosis
- Multiple Chemical Sensitivity
- SIDS
- Meningitis
- Bartter Syndrome
- Mitochondrial Disease
- Asthma
- Brain Tumor
- Fibromyalgia
- Hepatitis
- Breast Cancer
- Childhood Cancer
- Antitrypsin Deficiency
- Krabbe Disease
- Childhood Apraxia of Speech
- Crohn's and Colitis
- Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma
- Fibromuscular Dysplasia
- Omphalocele
- Fanconi Anemia
- Fibromuscular Dysplasia
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Myositis
- Rett Syndrome

- Scleroderma
- Hypoparathyroidism
- Pain
- Neurofibromatosis
- Congenital Cytomegalovirus
- Alzheimer's
- Sarcoidosis
- Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy
- Hank Kabel Sarcoma
- Arthrogyrosis Multiplex Congenita
- Diabetes
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Ataxia
- Dyskinesia
- Epilepsy

I have joined you in voting for and co-sponsoring legislation to bring awareness. We've named days, weeks, and months. We have new license plates and holidays. We've held press conferences, and sent out news releases. Unfortunately, we have not yet found cures. In that same amount of time the State of Ohio has directly spent precisely zero dollars from our general revenue fund on finding cures to these horrid conditions. I believe it is time we take the next step from awareness to direct action toward finding a cure.

To accomplish this goal, House Bill 556 would create a fund equal to 1/10 of 1% of the General Revenue Fund dedicated to providing grants for medical research at Ohio's accredited public medical schools. Passage of this bill will help to further broaden the amount of research and medical innovation being developed in Ohio for chronic, terminal, and incurable diseases. This represents roughly \$31.7 million from FY 2018.

One potential disease eligible for research funding through HB 556 is Alzheimer's disease, an illness that took the life of my Grandmother Frances Lewandowski for who this bill is named after. With more than 210,000 Ohioans currently suffering from Alzheimer's, an illness that ravages the minds of those affected and, more often than not, requires dedicated support from loved ones, it is essential that more is done to understand this disease's causes and potential remedies. According to the Centers for Disease Control, experts anticipate a 3.3% increase in those affected with Alzheimer's by 2060. This increase will inevitably require more medical and caretaker dollars from state programs already aimed at helping to care for this population of individuals.

Terminal and incurable diseases, such as diabetes, cancer, and ALS, already impose massive strains on our health care and insurance systems. To that end, not only are incurable and chronic illnesses incredibly expensive to manage, they make up 7 of the top 10 leading causes of death in Ohio. These simple facts make it ever-more important for medical research to work on determining what causes these incurable diseases and discover new treatments to manage and eventually cure them.

The House Finance Committee can show its commitment to fighting terminal and chronic disease by voting to send HB 556 to the full floor for a vote.

I repeat. Its time to take the next step toward helping our constituents whose lives have been plagued by terminal, chronic, and incurable disease. We are aware. At some point awareness demands action. Awareness should move you to action. This bill does creates that action and allows us to actually work toward a cure, rather than hoping the public donates toward one.

Thank you for your consideration, I welcome any questions on this bill.