



**Representatives Stephanie Howse and Michele Lepore-Hagan
11th and 58th Ohio House Districts**

**House Bill 335 – Joint Sponsor Testimony
Health Committee
Wednesday, October 18, 2017**

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Health Committee; thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony for House Bill 335, which would designate April as "Sarcoidosis Awareness Month." This legislation would classify the month of April as Sarcoidosis Month throughout the State of Ohio, which would focus on generating public awareness and understanding, compassion for those suffering from this disease, and support for medical research.

Sarcoidosis is an inflammatory disease that can affect almost any organ of the body. Sarcoidosis is a multi-system disorder, which means that symptoms typically depend on which organ the disease affects. In most cases, the disease will affect the lungs. Sarcoidosis causes the immune system, which normally protects the body from infection and disease, to overreact and resulting in damage to the body's own tissue.

The classic symptom of Sarcoidosis is the formation of granulomas, which are microscopic clumps of inflammatory cells that group together; if too many of these clumps form in an organ, they can interfere with how the organ's functions. Sarcoidosis can affect people of any age, race, or gender but is most common among adults between the ages of 20 and 40.

The cause of Sarcoidosis is currently unknown, but patients do have options for treatment. Currently, the Sarcoidosis Center within Cleveland Clinic's Respiratory Institute serves as a single point of access for patients to receive the best care for their condition. The Cleveland Clinic's Sarcoidosis Center offers a variety of services that includes the following:

- Providing a variety of specialists that handles individualized care for patients.
- Providing the newest testing for advanced diagnostic bronchoscopies for sarcoidosis that includes cardiac sarcoidosis, small-fiber neuropathy and neurosarcoidosis through the clinic's Neurosarcoidosis Clinic.
- Helping to reduce the affect that Sarcoidosis may have on the quality life of a patient.
- Researching sarcoidosis to understand the disease and find alternative treatments for care.

Statistics indicate that the true prevalence of sarcoidosis is underestimated. According to data collected through the National Center for Health Statistics, the prevalence of the disease increased



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steadily from 1999 to 2010. Studies also show that sarcoidosis increased more steadily than lung cancer. From 1999 to 2010, there were 10,348 reported cases of individuals dying from the disease in the United States.

The observance of Sarcoidosis Awareness Month will provide the people of Ohio with an opportunity to increase the understanding of this potentially fatal disease.

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Health Committee; thank you again for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony for House Bill 335. We are able to answer any questions you may have at this time.