

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman
Chair, House Health Committee
77 S. High St.
Columbus, OH 43215

Chair Huffman, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the House Health Committee, I thank you for this amazing opportunity to speak today, and your consideration of this bill that would help so many Ohioans. My name is Tommy Ritz and I have been a Type One Diabetic since the age of 4. I am currently an MBA student at William and Mary's Mason School of Business, and the CEO of two startups, Keto Block and Ritz Brother's Inc., which both focus on easing the suffering of both Type One and Type Two diabetics. As an undergraduate I attended Miami University, where I majored in supply chain management, marketing, and history.

I would like to begin by asking a question. How many people in this room can say they know someone who is a Type 1 or Type 2 diabetic? 1 in every 11 Americans, 30 million people in our great country, battle this illness every day. My father, eldest brother, and myself are included in this 30 million.¹ As of 2014, almost 1.5 million Ohioans suffer from this chronic condition.² The fact that I have to use approximations when describing one of the greatest plights upon Ohio and the American people is why I have taken the time to testify on behalf of House Bill 241, the Diabetes Registry Bill. My personal struggle with Type One diabetes is what inspired me to create a company focused on preventing an issue that kills 10,000 people every year, and why I am also in the process of forming second company focused on the safety of all diabetics. Here are some of the basic facts about diabetes.

- More people die from diabetes every year than from HIV and Tuberculosis combined.³
- Approximately 1 in every 5 dollars spent on healthcare in the United States, or \$322 billion dollars as of 2016, is spent on diabetes
- Every 21 seconds, someone in the United States is diagnosed with diabetes.

¹ Your Bibliography: Main.diabetes.org. (2017). Cite a Website - Cite This For Me. [online] Available at: <http://main.diabetes.org/dorg/images/infographics/adv-cost-of-diabetes.gif> [Accessed 28 Oct. 2017].

² The Burden of Diabetes in Ohio. [online] Available at: <http://main.diabetes.org/dorg/PDFs/Advocacy/burden-of-diabetes/ohio.pdf> [Accessed 28 Oct. 2017].

³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *National Diabetes Statistics Report: Estimates of Diabetes and Its Burden in the United States, 2014*. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services; 2014.

- There is little to no scientific consensus on what causes Type One diabetes, which makes up 10% of all diabetes diagnosis.⁴
- There is currently no database with an accurate and precise count of the total amount of diabetics or physiological information about those diagnosed

The issue of not having an accurate estimate of the number of diabetics or the correlated causes related to the diagnosis of diabetes in our state, and in our country, is an issue I ran into when I was founding Keto Block. I assumed that finding demographic information and information about the overall health of Type One diabetics would be a good area to initially focus my research. After 14 hours of data mining I realized two things. The first was that every approximation and estimation about the number of Type One diabetics in the United States was unusable. The numbers fluctuated between 1 to 3 million people. This wide range made it impossible to approximate the funding I would need, or to create a detailed business strategy to delegate to my board of officers. The second was that little to no aggregate information existed about the health of Type One diabetics. I was unable to find anything beyond very general demographic data. For example, I wanted to find the average A1c for Type One and Type Two diabetics. A1C is a common measure of a diabetic's blood sugar levels, and is used by endocrinologists as an indicator for how well a diabetic is managing their illness, but this information was unavailable.

These issues nearly prevented me from forming my startup, that will soon ease the suffering of 2 million people. There are others like me, who want to innovate in the field of diabetic management. Not having the information necessary to create the products and services needed by so many of our fellow Ohioans and Americans, will prevent some of these individuals and organizations from doing so. I believe house bill 241 is the first step in obtaining accurate information about this epidemic, and will help those, like myself, who seek to ease the suffering of diabetics through simplicity and innovation. I believe this information will augment the access to resources desperately needed by the diabetic community.

⁴ American Diabetes Association. (2017). The Cost of Diabetes. [online] Available at: <http://www.diabetes.org/advocacy/news-events/cost-of-diabetes.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/> [Accessed 28 Oct. 2017].

I thank you for your time.