



OHIO PHARMACISTS ASSOCIATION

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Proponent Testimony for HB 601

Antonio Ciaccia

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Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the House Health Committee, my name is Antonio Ciaccia, Director of Government & Public Affairs for the Ohio Pharmacists Association (OPA). I thank you for the opportunity to speak in favor of HB 601 and the strides it makes in increasing patient access to addiction treatment in Ohio.

I would like to thank Representative Tim Ginter for his tireless efforts to combat Ohio's opioid epidemic. HB 601 is just his latest work in this arena.

OPA is very supportive of the approach HB 601 is taking to build upon the work of Representative Sarah LaTourette, and Senators Shannon Jones and Charleta Tavares in the previous General Assembly, who advanced legislation to empower pharmacists to administer certain forms of long-acting injectable medications to patients.

HB 601 will make positive strides in utilizing pharmacists to assist in the fight against addiction, growing the list of medications that a pharmacist can administer to a patient. Current law allows for trained pharmacists, acting under a physician protocol and via a valid prescription, to administer a number of long-acting injectable medications like antipsychotics, contraception, vitamin B12, progesterone, and opioid antagonists. HB 601 will simply grow the types of addiction medications from opioid antagonists to any approved long-acting injectable drug used for addiction treatment.

This slight tweak will ensure that new, innovative addiction treatment drugs aren't excluded from the pharmacist's scope, and thus create inconsistent patient access in the marketplace that could compromise adherence and sobriety.

As long-acting medications are crucial for patients with medication adherence concerns, OPA believes that with limited administration sites in Ohio, access barriers to these important drugs should be minimized, and utilizing pharmacists will help eliminate those barriers.

I thank you for your consideration. I am happy to offer the Ohio Pharmacists Association's support for HB 601, and I'd welcome any questions you may have.

Antonio Ciaccia

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