



May 22, 2018

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Pain and Palliative Services – A1050
700 Children's Drive
Columbus, OH 43205

Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, OH 43215

HOUSE BILL 286, PROPONENT TESTIMONY

Chairman Burke, Vice Chair Beagle, Ranking Member Tavares and members of the Committee,

Thank you for your attention to the health of Ohioans. House Bill 286 is an opportunity to advance that health and I appreciate your time in hearing testimony this afternoon. My name is Zach Rossfeld. Originally from Lima, I am a lifelong Ohioan, and now practice palliative medicine here in Columbus at Nationwide Children's Hospital.

Palliative Care is:

- Part of the best available treatment for those with serious illness
- Woefully misunderstood by both patients and providers
- Concerningly unavailable to Ohioans

Palliative Care is:

- Part of the best available treatment for those with serious illness

He was born in 2016 and has an illness with no cure. Two weeks ago today, I sat in the family's living room. And I listened. I listened to his heart and lungs. Yet I also I listened to his parents' hopes for his quality of life and that they enjoy an upcoming family vacation. I answered their questions about what the hospital can offer their son. And we talked through their worry as to whether they're being good parents. This attention to emotion and honest communication were my main therapies; the medication for acid reflux...important but in a trivial way by comparison.



Palliative Care is:

- Woefully misunderstood by both patients and providers

The first sentence of a 2013 article in the New England Journal of Medicine reads, “palliative care suffers from an identity problem.” It goes on to cite 70% of Americans being, “not at all knowledgeable about palliative care,” and that a majority of health care providers associate it only with end of life care. Perception matches reality. Too little, too late. A missed opportunity. Indeed, pain, stress, nausea, fatigue, and financial woes don’t wait to start until someone is dying. Why then, are palliation of stress and symptoms delayed?

Palliative Care is:

- Concerningly unavailable to Ohioans

Ohio is a leader in healthcare. We transplant organs and bone marrow. We identify new types of cancer and find their cure. At the same time, however, how many Ohioans with a serious illness understand their diagnosis? How many have a sense of what to expect a year from now? How many would tell you their symptoms are well-controlled? As we continue to advance our science, we must also mind the supremely personal interaction that is medicine. The healthcare system needs help remembering to do this. Help that House Bill 286 will provide.

I ask for your support of House Bill 286 and welcome any questions you may have.

With thanks,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Zach Rossfeld".

Zach Rossfeld, M.D., FAAP