

House Energy and Natural Resources Committee
Chairman Nino Vitale
Opponent Testimony on Substitute House Bill 6
Testimony of William D. Hardie, MD

May 6, 2019

Dear Chair Vitale, Vice Chair Kick, Ranking Member Denson, and Members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee,

My name is William Hardie, MD and I am a Professor of Pediatrics and a Pediatric Pulmonologist at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. I am writing to you as an opponent to Ohio House Bill 6.

As a pediatric pulmonary physician with 25 years' experience, I can attest first-hand that children and adolescents with chronic lung conditions struggle to breathe when the air quality reaches unhealthy levels. This is not a novel observation. Medical providers have understood for almost a century that those who are sensitive to the adverse effects of air pollution, including children, the elderly and individuals with underlying cardiovascular and pulmonary conditions, suffer or die at higher rates when the air quality deteriorates.

What is new is a wealth of studies published over the past two years which demonstrate that even current standards of air quality are not sufficient to fully protect the healthy population. One such study published in *The Journal of Pediatrics* which focused on pregnant women in Ohio demonstrated an association between increased exposure to air pollution during the conception period and increased birth defects.

Decades of experience with chronic disease have demonstrated that the cost of prevention is far less than the cost of treatment such as decreased rates of lung disease and cancer with smoking cessation. In fact, the EPA has previously estimated that every dollar invested in reducing air pollution results in four to six dollars in health care savings.

Most Americans care deeply about healthy air and water. We spend 12 billion dollars annually to consume bottled water in large part due to perceived health benefits. Yet with a few notable exceptions, America's water supply is clean and safe, while the air many of us breathe is not. Policies which will improve the air quality are wise and essential investments for everyone's physical and economic health, which is why Ohio needs to maintain our renewable and efficiency standards. Despite recent amendments, House Bill 6 is still a step in the wrong direction for the health of Ohio residents.

Sincerely,



William D. Hardie, MD