



To: Members of the Ohio House Insurance Committee

Fr: Monica Hueckel, Senior Director of Government Relations, Ohio State Medical Association

Da: November 17, 2020

Re: SB 284

On behalf of the Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA), the state's oldest and largest professional organization representing Ohio physicians, medical residents, and medical students, we are writing today regarding Senate Bill 284.

OSMA supports the inclusion of Amendment No. AM_133_3374 into SB 284. This amendment uses language from legislation that OSMA has been supporting in the Senate and House (SB 254 and HB 443) concerning mental health benefit parity. These key provisions bring Ohio in alignment with the Federal Parity Law (also known as the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008) and enact certain compliance requirements to help with proper parity enforcement.

In essence, what this amendment will do is require insurers to cover treatment for mental health conditions and substance use disorder no more restrictively than treatments for physical illnesses and ailments of the body. This will help our state improve efforts to help those who need it access affordable and timely treatment for substance use disorders, as well as obtain necessary mental health treatment, which far too many patients are unable to access.

OSMA appreciates the Ohio Legislature for making this a priority issue, and for understanding that mental health benefit parity is a strong tool to help make Ohio healthier and to move forward in our efforts to support the recovery of individuals with substance use disorder. We urge acceptance of this amendment.

Thank you for the opportunity to be a meaningful contributor to the legislative process, and please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.