



**Written Proponent Testimony - SB 284**  
**Megan Testa, MD,**  
**Ohio Psychiatric Physicians Association**  
**to the Ohio House Insurance Committee**

**December 1, 2020**

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The Ohio Psychiatric Physicians Association (OPPA) is a statewide medical specialty organization representing more than 1,000 physicians who specialize in the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of mental illnesses, including substance use disorders. We are thankful for the opportunity to submit our comments to the committee today regarding Senate Bill 284.

Our association is appreciative of the addition of Amendment No. AM\_133\_3374 to SB 284 containing language which would require health benefit plans to comply with the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 (MHPAEA), ensuring parity between standard medical benefits and mental health benefits. This amendment included in the bill comes from separate mental health parity legislation that OPPA has actively supported.

Unfortunately, our current state law does not fully guarantee that health insurers will provide coverage for the treatment of mental health and addiction that is equal to the coverage provided for physical illnesses and conditions. This leaves many Ohioans vulnerable and many patients to slip through the cracks. Full parity between mental health and substance use disorder benefits and other medical benefits is a vital tool in addressing our current public mental health crises, as well as stemming health care costs created by untreated mental illness and substance use disorders in Ohio.

We encourage the committee to support passage of this legislation. Thank you for your attention to our written testimony and encourage you to reach out to us if you have any additional questions on this matter.