

**House Bill 230**  
**Proponent Testimony**  
**Ohio Senate Health, Human Services, and Medicaid Committee**  
**Sam Mierzejewski**  
**Brain Cancer Survivor**  
**November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

Chairman Burke, Vice-Chairman Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio, and all members of the Senate Health, Human Services, and Medicaid Committee. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 230 which seeks to designate May as Brain Cancer Awareness Month for the State of Ohio.

I am one of the rarest people in the world, I am a brain cancer survivor. Less than 10% of people diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor will survive beyond 15 months. Before I was diagnosed, I was a husband to a beautiful wife, a father to two wonderful kids, I had a successful career as a law enforcement professional, just a normal guy living life. The point being, I didn't do anything to bring this on. I didn't ask for this. No one does. No one could tell me how I got this or how I could prevent this from coming back. The only thing doctors could tell me was cancer does not discriminate, it can strike anyone at any time.

Cancer has touched my family profoundly and forever. I had to retire from a job I love. I still have deficits with my right arm, leg, and eye. I am not the same man my wife married or the same father for my kids. My brain has changed. This can happen to anyone and is a hallmark of brain cancer.

Because the survivorship rate with brain cancer is so small and the span of the victim's life is so short, researching this horrible disease is very difficult. I have met several of the doctors, nurses, and researchers behind the scenes, wonderful people doing wonderful work. They all agree, a cure is coming and coming soon. What they couldn't say was HOW soon. It could be a month, it could be ten years. They don't know. Awareness of the importance of this research and the funding for it could make the cure come sooner rather than later.

That's why this bill is so important. It can raise awareness of this deadly disease by putting it in the forefront of people's minds, and by doing so could possibly raise dollars for research which may lead to a higher survivorship rate and maybe, ultimately, a cure. It would be unbelievable to say you and I are members of the generation that found a cure for cancer.

You have the opportunity to contribute to this dream, a dream we all share- to eradicate cancer in our lifetime!

Members of the committee, thank you for your time and consideration.