



Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association

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Executive Director
House Bill 1
Proponent Testimony
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Chairman Eklund, Vice-Chair Manning, Ranking Member Thomas and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 1.

Our Association has in the past and continues to support legislation that expands opportunities for drug treatment and the ability to remove the stigma of conviction. Prosecutors have supported the creation and use of intervention in lieu of conviction to remove criminal charges for those succeeding at treatment and prosecutors are often the first person to suggest that someone be placed in ILC. Prosecutors have been at the forefront of establishing pretrial diversion programs and drug court dockets across Ohio. Prosecutors have supported the creation and use of certificates of qualification for employment that remove the automatic bar to certain employment opportunities.

We support House Bill 1 because we feel that it appropriately builds on these past proposals. It does this in two ways. First, it creates presumptive intervention in lieu of conviction that would require a judge to make a specific determination that a person who is otherwise eligible for ILC should not be placed in ILC. Second, the bill expands Ohio's record sealing statute, already one of the most expansive in the nation. Importantly from the perspective of Ohio's prosecutors House Bill 1 does these things without taking away tools that we feel are essential to the goals of promoting public safety, improving treatment options for drug addicted individuals, and reducing the negative impact of collateral consequences for those who have succeeded at treatment and are in recovery.

The Ohio Department of Health reported last week that drug overdose deaths in Ohio declined by 22.7% in 2018. This was the first decrease since 2009. While there were still more than 3,500 overdose deaths, still a tragically high number, the report is evidence that what we are doing is working. We have said for some time that we know what we are doing in Ohio works. We need to ensure that what we know works is more widely available and is available for the appropriate people. House Bill 1 is an expansion of what works.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 1. We encourage the committee's favorable consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions that you have.