

Testimony
HB 315
Involuntary Treatment

Chairmen LaRe vice chair White ranking member Leland and fellow members of the criminal Justice committee

I, Christine Shediack, am testifying against involuntary drug and alcohol treatment that is proposed with House Bill 315. I spent over 16 years working in Social Work in the State of Ohio. In those 16 years, I worked over half of them in the criminal justice branch. As I was trained in schooling and in the work force, involuntary drug treatment has been proven that it does not work. Yet, in this bill, it is proposed to be a condition of release.

What legislators have proposed, is even before conviction, a defendant, who is innocent until proven guilty in a court of law, go to mandatory/involuntary drug treatment or go to jail. What if that defendant is truly innocent, who's rights were violated? Those rights, a person has, seem to be boarding on the line of violating one's civil liberties. Why should this person go to counseling, be mandated to give consent to the courts, so that can be use that against them in trial? If you think that does not happen, then you are very wrong. It is happening all over the United States. The courts are now, stacking their case against you even before you have a jury in front of you!

In an article published in the U.S. News, "There's no consensus among clinicians that mandatory treatment is an effective approach, and research suggests it is not particular effective. A 2016 meta-analysis of nine studies in the International Journal of Drug Policy found no evidence of improved outcomes with compulsory treatment" (idea?, 2018). If the research shows that there is no evidence of this type of involuntary treatment working, then why are we proposing this in a bill?

In a journal entry, *The Effectiveness of Compulsory Drug Treatment: A Systematic Review*, the author states in his conclusion, "Based on the available peer-reviewed scientific literature, there is little evidence that compulsory drug treatment is effective in promoting abstinence from drug use or in reducing criminal recidivism. It is noteworthy that this systematic review includes evaluations of not only drug detention centers, but of a range of compulsory inpatient and outpatient treatment approaches. Additionally, the reductions in drug use and criminal recidivism as a result of compulsory drug treatment interventions were generally short-term or of low clinical significance." Werb, D., Kamarulzaman, A., Meacham, M. C., Rafful, C., Fischer, B., Strathdee, S. A., & Wood, E. (2016). The effectiveness of compulsory drug treatment: A systematic review. *The International journal on drug policy*, 28, 1–9.
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The question to ask yourself is, the research shows that this treatment option of involuntary treatment is not effective, then why are we doing it? As one understands when Oxytocin was released into the medical field in July 2001, the country, including this state, saw an increase rate of crime and addiction. The government, thru the FDA, push this drug out the door, and into the doctor's offices as an end all to pain. Crime rates rose to all time high, overdose rates increased by leaps and bounds. Per the O.A.R.C., "Ohio overdose rates outshined all the other 49 states in the country for 2016. This state leads the U.S. in opioid overdose deaths as well as specifically heroin overdose deaths. An overall look at these past couple of years has shown that 1 in 9 overdoses that occur in the United States happen in Ohio." (OHIO ADDICTION RECOVERY CENTER, 2022)

With the research listed above, about overdose rates, it appears to me, that the courts are attempting to "save everyone with a drug addiction." The problem is not matter what treatment, tough love, the number of consequences given, a person will only become sober when they want to be sober. Also, it appears after the years of raising fatal drug overdoses, the solutions, so that the court system doesn't look like the bad guy, is to start with involuntary drug treatment. Well, if the current outcome of court ordered probation with drug treatment is not successful, what makes anyone think this will change with mandating treatment from the time of arraignment?

The issue is not that treatment is not obtainable, because I can walk into any drug treatment center in Springfield Ohio, ask the staff for an assessment, and I would have one! The problem is not cost, it can be paid for, never have I seen a person who wants treatment for drugs be turned away from services. The problem is, does the person want the care and willing to make the commitment to it?

I will close with this final thought for you today, let me introduce the father of my three children, whom I spent 16 years of my life with. I am going to present you, his story, let you see the outcome of involuntary drug treatment.

Christopher Fulton Sr had four children, three of which I had with him as a family. He suffered from schizophrenia and drug addiction. His life with the criminal court system, started at 18 years old. From 1997 to September 7, 2016, Christopher Fulton Sr., had a total of 25 cases that were heard in the Clark County Ohio Municipal and/or Common Pleas Court. He had seven, misdemeanor guilty, 11 cases dismissed, and 7 felony cases. He was court ordered (mandated/involuntary) drug treatment. On September 7, 2016, he walked out of Clark County Ohio Common Pleas Probation, after being on the overdose list, ordered to be in treatment, warrants in adjacent counties (in pick up radius). He died 52 minutes after leaving his probation officer. I begged and begged for treatment and jail, but it didn't work. If his probation officer, would of drug tested him that day, done his dull diligence, placed him in jail, he would be alive today. His probation officer, that he saw on his final day on this earth, was the same person that had him as a client, when he was placed in West Central Drug Treatment. The system well failed him and our children. The probation officer was well trained in addiction, he worked as a counselor and served as Chris's counselor, let a man walk out of his office, knowing that he

needed to be placed in jail. No one will ever tell me that the courts did not fail us! Now, I ask you, of all these involuntary/mandatory treatment for drugs, do you think it work? I would say, in the case of Christopher Fulton Sr, it did not work. May he rest in peace!