

**The Ohio House of Representatives**  
**Families, Aging, and Human Services Committee**

**Testimony in Support of House Bill 212 – To Expand Eligibility for the Program for Medically Handicapped Children to  
Individuals up to age 26**

May 6, 2021

Dear Chairwoman Manchester, Vice Chairperson Cutrona, Ranking Member Liston, and Members of the Families, Aging, and Human Services Committee,

My name is Andrea Hoffman. I am a resident of Marion County and attend Ohio Northern University in Ada, Ohio, where I am a sophomore double majoring in Political Science and Public Relations and pursuing minors in Public Policy, Public Health, Pre-Law, and Religion. I am twenty years old, and I am living with the life-limiting disease cystic fibrosis (CF). I am currently covered by the Children with Medical Handicaps Program of the Ohio Department of Health. I will age out of eligibility for the CMH Treatment program when I turn twenty-one in December of 2021. This program has assisted my family and me since I was four months of age. CF requires costly medication and treatment, and the CMH program has come behind our family's private insurance to keep us fiscally stable and provide the treatment that I need in order to live a longer and stronger life. On behalf of the approximately 800 young adults currently covered by the CMH program who find themselves transitioning annually from eligibility of the CMH program due to turning age 21, I wish to provide this testimony supporting Ohio House Bill 212. I apologize that I cannot be with you in person as classes for the spring semester are finishing this week.

I am a lifetime patient at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio. I am fortunate for the care and treatment I have received and continue to receive at the Cystic Fibrosis Care Center, caring for both children and adults. According to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation Patient Registry, there are approximately 30,000 individuals living with CF in the United States, including 1500 Ohioans. Many of those living with CF in Ohio are covered by the CMH program. CF is a progressive genetic disease that primarily affects the lungs and the digestive system and can have a serious impact on every system of the body. There is much treatment and care required behind the scenes to battle this disease. Due to advancements in medical treatments and knowledge of this rare disease, the average life expectancy is currently in the mid-forties.

Like those my age, I have experienced the normal transitions one experiences, such as transitioning from high school to college and living primarily with my family to experiencing what life is like on my own. As you can imagine, young adults living with serious medical conditions experience additional layers of transitions. This bill highlights one of those challenges and provides a solution for those like me who find themselves in the midst of transition. The change in eligibility for the CMH program will allow me and others to continue with an adequate financial safety net while navigating the difficult season of our lives, trying to determine life's vocation, employment, and insurance coverage. This change will parallel the eligibility of staying insured under my parent's health insurance.

I urge your support of HB 212 and your support of Ohioans like me who may find themselves with inadequate health insurance coverage and financial stability.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Sincerely,

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