



9 March 2021

Dustin Holfinger  
 American Heart Association  
 Ohio House Finance Committee  
 HB 110 – Interested Party Testimony

Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chair Plummer, Ranking Minority Member Crawley, and members of the House Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the American Heart Association regarding HB 110 - the state Operating Budget. I am Dustin Holfinger, the State Government Relations Director for the American Heart Association (AHA). The AHA is a non-profit organization that funds cardiovascular medical research, educates consumers on healthy living, and fosters appropriate cardiac care in an effort to reduce disability and deaths caused by cardiovascular disease and stroke. Our organization is looking forward to working with this chamber, and the Senate, in an attempt to advance our mission to be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives and build a healthier Ohio. That process begins with all of us, as individuals and elected officials, taking a moment to consider increasing funding for programs that will help Ohioans that have been affected the most by the economic downturn due to the pandemic and the state's business closures. We believe that given the economic strength of this state these items are certainly feasible, and a good starting point for public health-related policies.

As you deliberate this legislation over the next couple months, there is an opportunity to build on the progress the State has made to prevent and treat these deadly conditions and to address our food insecurity concerns in every corner of the state, so that people of all backgrounds can enjoy more of life's precious moments.

As you consider this legislation, below are current funding opportunities I would like to highlight and ask for your consideration.

- **Tobacco Use Prevention Fund**

- The Governor proposed an increase in the "Tobacco Use Prevention Fund" line item (440656) of \$2.5M in each fiscal year.
- Funding total: \$14.5 million in each FY (+20.8% increase)
- The program promotes healthy outcomes in Ohioans by limiting the effects of tobacco and tobacco smoke by taking steps to lower smoking rates.
- Major components of the program include Prevention, Cessation, Enforcement and Data and Statistics.
- Just a 1% decline in Ohio smokers will mean 91,000 less smokers and could save up to \$75M over 5 years through a reduction in smoking-related medical costs.
- Ohio – 20.5% smoking rate. US average – 14%
- We ask that the House retain this funding level throughout the budget process.

- **Ohio's Produce Prescription Program (PRx)** - works to help residents increase access to healthy food in low-resource neighborhoods; and supports fruit and vegetable access for low-income pregnant women to support healthy birth outcomes and reduce infant mortality rates.
  - o Earmarked program within the "Infant Vitality" line-item (440474).
  - o "Infant Vitality" funded at \$17,637,292 in FY 2022 (+45.3%) and \$12,137,292 in FY 2023 (-31.2%).
  - o The AHA has joined with Produce Perks and other health organizations to advocate for a 100% increase in PRx Program funding.
  - o Previously funded amount: \$175,000/year.
  - o Requested amount: \$350,000/year.
  
- **Produce Perks (SNAP Double Up Program)**
  - o Any amount spent with SNAP/EBT or P-EBT, up to \$25, will be matched \$1-for-\$1. Produce Perks matching dollars are spent only on fruits and vegetables.
  - o Has historically been an earmarked program via the TANF Block Grant.
  - o TANF Block Grant funded at \$961,819,158 in FY 2022 (+1.8%) and 1,025,474,447 in FY 2023 (+6.6%).
  - o Currently, Produce Perks operates in 33 of the 88 counties, leaving many citizens in rural counties without this option.
  - o This increase would allow Produce Perks to expand its operations into 20% more counties.
  - o Previously funded amount: \$250,000/year.
  - o Requested amount: \$500,000/year.
  
- **SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)**
  - o ODJFS is consolidating two Federal Funds appropriation line items that support reimbursements to county departments of job and family services for costs of administering the Food Assistance Program into one line item.
    - The existing ODJFS line-item Food Assistance Programs (600610) will absorb the former Emergency Food Distribution (600641) line item.
  - o Funded through ODJFS in the Food Assistance Programs line item.
  - o This program is funded at \$210,395,858 in FY 2022 an increase of 13.3%, and funded at \$215,299,061 in FY 2023, an increase of 2.3%.
  - o We ask that the legislature maintain this level of funding for the SNAP program.

In addition to the appropriation requests above, the AHA also asks that you consider these additional policy opportunities within this Operating Budget, including:

- **Stroke Registry**
  - o Mandatory, statewide collection of data regarding any stroke patient in an ODH-recognized Comprehensive, Primary, or Acute Stroke Ready, or any Primary Stroke Centers that attain supplementary levels of distinction.
  - o This legislation will provide protected data confirming that steps are being taken to care for stroke patients properly & swiftly.
  - o Ohio Department of Health is urged to continue its use of the AHA's *Get with The Guidelines – Stroke* tool.
  
- **Telephonic CPR requirements for 9-1-1 dispatchers in Ohio**
  - o This is one piece of a much larger "Next Gen 9-1-1" legislative package that overhauls 9-1-1 in the state.

- All Ohio PSAPs (Public Safety Answering Point) or dispatch units, under the new draft legislation, will be required to be trained in the Emergency Medical Dispatch, which include telephonic instruction of many situations, including T-CPR.
- The AHA is fully supportive of a 9-1-1 system overhaul as it will require all PSAPs to be EMD certified, thus providing all callers the ability to receive bystander instructions over the phone from trained individuals prior to EMS arrival.
  
- **Bottle Filling Stations for Ohio new-build schools**
  - Passed as a part of SB 259 from the last General Assembly, we are asking for additional requirements for these products that mirror the current drinking fountain requirement.
  - Drinking fountain access is denied across the state and most schools are installing bottle filling stations to modernize their facilities.
  - Policy would only affect new-builds and major renovation projects – no retroactivity.
  - Our request for changes includes:
    - At least 1 bottle filling station per 100 students
    - At least 1 bottle filling station on each floor of the building
    - At least 1 bottle filling station in all school food service areas
    - At least 1 bottle filling station near gymnasiums.
  
- **Adding Vapor Products to the Smoke-Free Workplace Policy**
  - Ohio voters approved a smoking ban in November of 2006 which prohibits smoking in public places and places of employment.
    - The ban provides a statewide minimum standard of protection from the health hazards associated with exposure to secondhand smoke.
  - Section 3794.01 in HB 110 adds “the use of electronic smoking device and a vapor product” to the prohibitions.
  - The AHA fully supports this addition and would ask the legislature to retain the addition of vapor products, and consider expanding it to also include the use of Other Tobacco Products, to the Smoke-Free Workplace Act.

We thank you for this opportunity and if any additional information is required as you consider these requests, please do not hesitate to reach out for additional information or further discussion.



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