
Prevention Action Alliance

Lifetime Prevention | Lifetime Wellness

Ohio House Health Committee Prevention Action Alliance February 23, 2021

Good Morning, Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, and members of the Health Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony in consideration of House Bill 9 (“HB 9”). My name is Jean-Philippe Dorval, and I am the Advocacy and Public Policy Liaison for Prevention Action Alliance (PAA). PAA is a 32-year-old statewide nonprofit organization based in Columbus, Ohio. We are dedicated to leading healthy communities in the prevention of substance misuse and the promotion of mental health wellness. PAA offers a wealth of resources, training services, grants, and advocacy opportunities for those who are active in the prevention and mental health fields.

Dextromethorphan also known as DXM is a cough suppressant found in many over-the-counter cold medicines and is recognized as a substance of abuse in the United States. It is synthetically produced and has been known to be abused by youth since it was approved by the FDA in 1950. When people take too much DXM, they might hallucinate and have "out-of-body" sensations. DXM also depresses brain function, particularly the parts of the brain that control breathing and heart function. These effects can last as long as 6 hours.¹

DXM also can make users have trouble controlling their limbs and cause blurred vision, slurred speech, dizziness, and impaired judgment.

HB 9 utilizes a simple yet effective evidence-based prevention strategy by restricting the purchase of over-the-counter cough medications that contain DXM to persons over the age of 18. Favorable passage of this bill would be an impactful step towards protecting our youth from the dangers of substance abuse.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony as a proponent for HB 9, and I can be contacted through the chair’s office should the committee have any questions.

¹ <https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/dxm.html>