



**Representative Joe Miller  
House District 56**

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**House Bill 251 Sponsor Testimony  
October 12, 2021**

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, and members of the House Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer joint sponsor testimony on House Bill 251.

This legislation puts the health and well-being of Ohio's homeowners, landlords, and tenants at the forefront of the home buying and renting process. Our bill seeks to point out the dangers and effects that toxic mold can have on children and parents when undetected in a home. I believe that when vital information that is literally life and death is not readily available, we are doing a disservice to those we wish to serve.

This idea was brought to me by a constituent, Brandon Chappo, who was living in a home that turned out to be infested with mold without his knowledge. After careful research and thoughtful discussion, we believed it was time that the state of Ohio took these dangers seriously. Brandon has suffered from the damage that was done to him for the lack of knowledge pertaining to the mold he encountered and he has made it his mission to see that this type of harm doesn't happen to others.

Ohio is an old state with old homes. Many homes that were built years ago are still being resided in by Ohioans who are susceptible to mold. Our children deserve to live and go to school in mold-free environments and research has shown that they are the most likely to be affected when inhaling, over long periods of time, mold toxins. The neurocognitive effects at such a young age are an unfortunate truth that many of our children are experiencing. Other effects include respiratory diseases such as asthma along with gastrointestinal, cancers, infertility, fatigue and other forms of cognitive impairment.

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Many will think that we are looking to place a burden on law-abiding and well-intentioned homeowners and renters, but in fact we only wish to spread education across our state as this information is not universally known. We want to be sure that the dangers of mold are as publicized as the past lead and radon campaigns. Working alongside the Ohio Department of Health is our goal with intentions to design a program to help those parties who are well-intentioned, but might not know the best course of action.

As stated before, this information is not common knowledge to many people. I, personally, owned a rental and found that there was water damage and potentially mold growing. I believe many homeowners face the similar situation that I was in and express, "What do I do to fix this?" We want to help them for their property's sake, the potential renters and for their own personal benefit as an owner. We have an opportunity to lead on this issue and put Ohio's health at the forefront of an important discussion. This is a fair bill. Simply put, it is transparency and public health information to empower Ohioans. There are no mandatory inspections or appropriations requests and no certification requirements. We are finding that this idea has bipartisan support and a step in the right direction.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on House Bill 251. My joint sponsor and I would be happy to answer any questions from the committee after testimony from Representative Russo.