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Jessica E. Miranda

State Representative

Chairman Lipps, Vice-Chair Holmes, Ranking member Russo, and members of the House Health Committee,

Thank you for having this important hearing today on House Bill 50, otherwise known as Paige’s Law. This legislation will amend portions of the Revised Code regarding the Uniform Duties to the Incapacitated Persons act and identifying devices. HB 50 simply means to update the law’s understanding as it relates to first responders, their interactions with incapacitated individuals, and the many technological advancements in this field. The portions of code to be modified by HB 50 have not been revised since their introduction in 1976. Unfortunately, some aspects of this code are just simply outdated. Whether it is terms used or descriptions given, the original section of code has a 1976 understanding of how EMTs and other first responders address and care for incapacitated individuals.

This disconnect between the code as written and the reality of 2022 is perfectly demonstrated by “identifying devices.” As the code stands now, this term “identifying devices” has no concept of the technical advancements in this field. Simply describing them as “an identifying bracelet, necklace, metal tag, or similar device bearing the emergency

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symbol and the information needed in an emergency” does not adequately cover what this device has become in the year 2022. A new form of identifying device, medical ID bracelets, have become available and offer so much potential. Individuals who have underlying health conditions and are at a greater risk for suffering an incapacitating episode now utilize these more advanced bracelets. Including all the information any first responder would need at the scan of a bar code, this technological breakthrough must be accurately reflected in the law.

Too often we hear stories of EMTs or first responders arriving on scene and not checking an incapacitated person for an identifying device or a Medical ID bracelet. To be clear, this is through no fault of the first responders. The culprit for the procedural mistake is really in the training. A training that looks to the Ohio Revised Code for its description of terms. By updating this portion of the law we can begin the process of modernizing the way we train first responders and how they interact with persons they are providing care for.

With this in mind, I want to share a personal story of how this issue has impacted Paige, whom this bill is named after. Paige has some health conditions that have required urgent medical attention at

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times, including Psychogenic Nonepileptic Seizures that due to initial appearance, lead to immediate treatment with drugs like Ativan. However, unfortunately use of this medication actually makes her condition go on longer and causes additional issues. Due to the loopholes in the current law, Paige has experienced dire consequences in her treatment and there have been times that nobody has looked at her medical ID bracelet, which gives specific instructions for her treatment. HB 50 would address these concerns and help improve and modernize the treatment and experiences of individuals in these situations.

HB 50 serves as a common sense solution to bridge the gap between past and current understanding of these technical terms. This bill is just good government going through and modernizing the law to better reflect the practices, words, and equipment utilized by first responders.

Thank you.