Public Health and Preventive Medicine Interest Group
Proponent
House Bill 251
Ohio House Health Committee

Thank you Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, and members of the House Health Committee. My name is Hayley Dunlop, MPH, and I would like to provide proponent testimony for House Bill 251 on behalf of the Public Health and Preventive Medicine Interest Group at an Ohio medical school.

As a student of medicine and public health, I have dedicated my life and career to keeping patients and communities healthy. However, as a future physician, it is difficult for me to ensure that my patients are in an optimal state of health if they are living in a potentially hazardous environment. Mold has been shown to cause multi-system adverse health effects among those who are chronically exposed, including (but not limited to) asthma, shortness of breath, impaired cognitive function, fatigue, musculoskeletal issues, gastrointestinal distress, and depression. A systematic review of the literature surrounding toxic mold published in 2020 concluded that “the association between adverse respiratory system health effects and microbial exposure is not doubted (Dooley et al., 2020, Ratnaseelan et al., 2018).”

Toxic mold is a hazard that can affect the health of all Ohioans, and as such should be treated with the same caution that surrounds radon, lead, or asbestos. Ohioans already receive education on environmental hazards such as lead and radon when purchasing or renting a home, and deserve to be educated on toxic mold as well. The Ohio Indoor Safe Air Act would ensure that every Ohio resident is educated on the health effects of mold contamination, which would improve health outcomes in our state.

This bill would protect the public health and safety of Ohioans, and as a student of medicine and public health, I hope you will support the passage of the Ohio Indoor Safe Air Act. Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

References:

1. Dooley, M. and McMahon, S., 2020. A comprehensive review of mold research literature from 2011-2018. *Int Med Rev*, *6*, p.1.

2. Ratnaseelan, A.M., Tsilioni, I. and Theoharides, T.C., 2018. Effects of mycotoxins on neuropsychiatric symptoms and immune processes. *Clinical therapeutics*, *40*(6), pp.903-917.