

Re: Support for HB 251, The Ohio Indoor Safe Air Act

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chairman Holmes, Ranking Member Russo and distinguished members of the Ohio House Health Committee:

My name is Jason Galdun, RA, NCARB, and I am writing in support of HB 251, The Ohio Indoor Safe Air Act.

I am a licensed architect in the state of Ohio and a supporter of Brandon Chappo, the individual behind HB 251, and his efforts to create positive change to prevent others from becoming victims of mold related illness.

While in school to become an Architect, students are taught to design buildings as if the world was a blank canvas. In reality, the urban landscape is filled with aging structures in which, to become a part of, one either tears down and starts anew or renovates what is existing. Demolishing existing structures and constructing new can be a costly venture, leading many to renovate existing buildings. I personally love breathing life back into old homes and buildings. However, if done incorrectly, one could be concealing years of faulty construction and maintenance, creating the hazards which this bill is bringing to light.

As an Architect, I commonly deal with radon, where acceptable guideline levels are set by the EPA. More frequently, asbestos must also be tested for, in which a hazardous material testing agency is typically hired to assess existing conditions and make remediation recommendations based on the type of asbestos discovered. Conversely, the options for mold detection are very limited and typically encompass that which can be seen with the naked eye. Lacking, however, is what may be unknowingly lurking in wall cavities, crawl spaces, between floors, or in rooms/spaces that have been simply closed off and left as is. Ironically, mold spores do not need to be disturbed to become hazardous like materials containing asbestos, yet asbestos regulations are well established. Whereas, when mold is present in any form, it has a high level of toxicity, but currently has no regulatory guidelines.

Based on Brandon's personal experience and the countless cases going undiagnosed or misdiagnosed, there is a strong need for a philosophical change in how this issue is understood and acknowledged. It is my professional opinion that testing for molds be regulated and enforced, similar to the laws regulating asbestos, radon, and lead. This is especially important for mold since the age of a building does not dictate the presences of mold. It can appear in buildings of any age, given the right environment. HB 251 could be this first step to establishing this warranted need for change.

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chairman Holmes, Ranking Member and Joint Sponsor Russo, and distinguished members of the Ohio House Health Committee, I ask for your help and support for HB 251, The Ohio Indoor Safe Air Act.

Sincerely,

Jason Galdun, RA, NCARB
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