



CHARITABLE HEALTHCARE NETWORK

Ohio: Stronger. Healthier. Together.

February 22, 2021

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chair John, Ranking Member Kelly and members of the State and Local Government committee:

My name is Deborah Miller, and I am the Executive Director of Charitable Healthcare Network, a state association for free and charitable clinics and pharmacies. I am submitting this testimony today to express my strong opposition to HB 90, which would allow the legislature to rescind or limit health orders and directives.

Providing care to our underserved patients during the COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging for our 52 members. CHN has worked closely with our members to ensure that they have the resources they need to stay safe and stay open. We are confident in our Governor and Health Departments for their swift and competent decision making regarding health orders and directives. While these orders may have posed challenges for some of our members, we recognize that they have been crucial and instrumental in slowing the spread of COVID-19.

It is common sense that health-related orders should be based upon science and data. During health emergencies, such as a pandemic, we want the health protocols protecting our patients to be rooted in fact. Health departments have the expertise needed to determine the best course of action - an expertise that most members of the legislature do not possess. Shifting decision-making power to the legislature in this instance makes no sense and does not make our members or patients any safer.

I also fail to see how placing 30 day limitations upon orders is consistent with protecting the health of the citizens of Ohio. Random time frames that disrupt the needed protections only endanger us. It makes no sense to implement health orders to protect the public only to halt those orders randomly because of an arbitrary time frame decided upon through legislation. The current pandemic has made this infinitely clear to all of us.

The health of Ohio citizens should rest upon science and fact -- and not upon political ideology of elected officials or the undue influence of donors. For these reasons, I urge you to vote no on HB 90.

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