

June 8, 2021

Chairman Baldrige, Vice Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy, and members of the Ohio House Transportation and Public Safety Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 138.

UC Health Emergency Medicine is recognized as one of the best Emergency Medicine programs in the country. Our Emergency Medicine training program, established by the University of Cincinnati Medical Center, was the first program of its kind when it was developed in 1970. All UC Health Emergency Medicine physicians are residency-trained in Emergency Medicine, a program that provides four additional years of specialty training.

Current law authorizes physicians, physician assistants, and advanced practice registered nurses to sign do-not-resuscitate (DNR) orders. These documents honor the wishes of a patient that do not wish to seek medical attention if they become incapacitated. However, Ohio law permits first responders to acknowledge a DNR only if the document is signed by a physician. Due to this inability to acknowledge a DNR signed by other permitted practitioners, first responders must take every possible action to save the patient's life, ignoring the monumental decision exemplified in the DNR order. This leaves our staff in a terrible position where they must disregard the decision made by the patient, causing distress for all involved parties.

HB 138 solves this issue by permitting first responders to honor a DNR signed by a physician assistant or an advanced practice registered nurse. By including this provision in House Bill 138, all DNR orders would be honored, and our team members would no longer be placed in the impossible situations that the law currently creates.

We greatly appreciate Representative Baldrige's leadership on this important issue and respectfully request House Bill 138 be favorably reported out of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee. Please contact me with any questions the committee may have regarding this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Gregory J. Fermann MD'.

Gregory J. Fermann, MD  
Medical Director  
University of Cincinnati Medical Center  
Center for Emergency Care  
Professor and Executive Vice Chair  
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