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Memorandum to the Ohio Senate Health Committee

From: The Ohio Council of Behavioral Health & Family Services Providers
Date: October 5, 2021
Subj: Support for HB 41

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer written testimony on House Bill 41. The Ohio Council fully supports this legislative measure.

HB 41 would include forensic mental health providers, mental health evaluation providers, and regional psychiatric hospital employees to the list of professions consolidated into the term “designated public service worker,” whose residential and familial information is exempted from disclosure under public records laws.

Such providers are often involved in challenging and difficult work and their privacy should be protected. Indeed, in Ohio we currently exempt peace officers, prosecutors, judges, and a multitude of other occupations from the public records law. Adding forensic psychologists and mental health evaluation providers to this modes list of exemptions would be appropriate. Indeed, the Ohio House passed HB 41 in March of 2021 by a vote of 93 to 1.

Accordingly, the Ohio Council thanks the committee for its time and consideration on this important matter and urges the committee to favorably report the bill to the Senate floor for a vote.