



## **SB 296 Proponent Testimony Cameron McNamee – State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy**

Chair Huffman, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on SB 296. My name is Cameron McNamee, and I am the Director of Policy and Communications for the State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy.

SB 296 seeks to expand Ohio's ability to address rising overdose deaths attributed to fentanyl and fentanyl analogs. Fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines. Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye (see Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Bulletin starting on next page). To tackle this public health crisis, the bill removes most requirements for the distribution of naloxone and clarifies that fentanyl test strips are not prohibited under Ohio's drug paraphernalia statute.

Expanding access to the opioid reversal drug naloxone ensures that this life-saving medication can be distributed to those who are at-risk of an opioid overdose. Naloxone has no potential for abuse and if given to a person who is not experiencing an opioid overdose, it has no effect. This legislation maintains common sense standards for naloxone distribution like requiring instructions for use, proper storage, and requirements to call 9-1-1 before or after administration. However, it removes the need for requirements such as prescriber authorized protocols and Board of Pharmacy licensure that may present a barrier to community-based distribution programs. The Board feels comfortable removing the drug from its licensing requirements because, to date, we have not taken any administrative action against a licensee for inappropriate or unsafe distribution of naloxone.

SB 296 also clarifies the legal status of fentanyl test strips. Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl in a person's drug supply. They have also been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. By following the lead of several other states – most recently Arizona – in clarifying the legality of these strips, this legislation can empower local communities and organizations to develop interventions that can save lives.

Chair Huffman and members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 296. The Board is proud to support common-sense legislation that would expand the tools for local communities to address Ohio's drug overdose epidemic. To demonstrate the impact this will have on local communities, I have included 66 letters of support from organizations and individuals throughout Ohio with my testimony. I would welcome any questions you may have at this time.



# Warning: Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio

Counterfeit/fake prescription tablets that look like alprazolam (Xanax®) and oxycodone (Oxycontin®) are being sold in Ohio. They contain fentanyl, a powerful drug that can kill, and other contents that could cause death.

The number and letter markings, colors, and scoring lines on the fake pills make them look identical to the real/legitimate pills. It is nearly impossible to tell the difference with the naked eye.

Fake tablets are **not** being given out by licensed healthcare providers. They often are sold online through social media or “dark web” hidden websites and are also sold person-to-person by sellers who claim they are real.

**NEVER take a tablet or any prescription medication that is not from a licensed healthcare provider.**

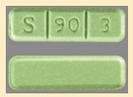
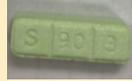
**Note: Levels of deadly drugs can vary from tablet to tablet, even if they are from the same batch. If you have any pills that are not from a licensed healthcare provider, DO NOT take any more.**

Signs that tablets could be fake:

- The tablets do not come from a licensed healthcare provider.
- The tablets are not in prescription packaging (such as a labeled pill bottle).
- The tablets are being sold individually or in unusually small quantities.
- The tablets are being sold in unusually large quantities.

It is often difficult to determine if a pill is legitimate or counterfeit. Below are examples.

## Alprazolam/Xanax® Counterfeit prescription alprazolam and Xanax® tablets have been seized in Ohio.

| Legitimate pills   |                            | Fake pills   | Common slang       |
|--|----------------------------|--|--------------------|
|   | Green pill marked S 90 3.  |   | Zannies<br>Xan/Zan |
|   | Blue pill marked B 707.    |   | Bars<br>Hulks      |
|   | White pill marked G 372 2. |   | Ladders            |
|   | Yellow pill marked R 039.  |   |                    |
|  | White pill marked XANAX 2. |  |                    |

## Oxycodone/OxyContin® Counterfeit prescription M 30 and A 215 oxycodone tablets have been seized in Ohio.

| Legitimate pills  |                         | Fake pills  | Common slang |
|---|-------------------------|---|--------------|
|  | Blue pill marked M 30.  |  | Oxy<br>Roxy  |
|  | Blue pill marked A 215. | No image available.   | 30s          |

Fentanyl is an opioid painkiller that can cause severe breathing problems or death in high doses.

### Signs to watch for

The following symptoms could be a sign that you or someone you know has taken a high dose of fentanyl or another opioid:

- Unresponsiveness/being unconscious or passed out.
- Not breathing or slow breathing.
- Lips and nails turning the wrong color.
- Choking or coughing.
- Cold or clammy skin.
- Pupils in the eyes are extremely small.
- Dizziness or disorientation.

### How to help

Naloxone, also called NARCAN®, is a medication that can reverse an opioid overdose and save lives by blocking the effects of opioids on the brain and quickly restoring breathing. Naloxone is safe: If it is given to someone who has not taken opioids it causes no harm, and emergency medical professionals have used naloxone for more than 40 years.

Please note: Naloxone cannot be self-administered.

**If you believe you or someone else is in immediate danger, call 911.**

In crisis? Call 1-800-662-HELP (4357) or text “4HOPE” to 741741.

*If you witness an overdose, always call for help, even if you are afraid you could be arrested. Ohio's Good Samaritan Law protects you by allowing varying levels of immunity for people who call 911 during an overdose.*

Issued by:



Department of Health



# Additional Recommendations

## For healthcare providers

Because of the increase in counterfeit prescription tablets with fentanyl and other potentially lethal contents, the Ohio Department of Health makes these recommendations to first responders, healthcare providers, substance abuse treatment professionals, community-based Project DAWN (Deaths Avoided With Naloxone) programs, and others who interact with people who use illicit drugs.

## Help individuals access and carry naloxone

Encourage patients/clients who use illicit drugs, as well as their family and friends, to carry naloxone. Refer them to a local Project DAWN community-based naloxone education and distribution program or refer them to a local pharmacy that dispenses naloxone. More information about where to obtain naloxone is available at [www.odh.ohio.gov/projectdawn](http://www.odh.ohio.gov/projectdawn). Naloxone is also available at most Ohio pharmacies without a prescription. A list of Ohio pharmacies offering naloxone is available at [www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/stopoverdose](http://www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/stopoverdose).

## Administer naloxone in drug overdoses when non-opioids are suspected/indicated

Even though naloxone is not effective in treating drug overdoses caused solely by stimulants such as cocaine and methamphetamines, the administration of naloxone may be helpful in drug overdoses caused by a combination of stimulants and opioids like fentanyl and its analogs.

## Educate patients/clients who use illicit substances about the dangers of drugs being mixed with fentanyl

Emphasize the increased risk of overdose and death. Key points can be found in the next column. Information to share with community members also is available at [www.OHAagainstOD.ohio.gov](http://www.OHAagainstOD.ohio.gov).

## Dangers of illicit drugs potentially mixed with fentanyl

- Fentanyl is often mixed with other drugs without the user's knowledge.
- Fentanyl is more likely to be fatal due to its high potency and the length of time it stays in the body.
- Avoid mixing drugs (including alcohol), which increases the risk of overdose.
- Do not use drugs while alone, so that someone else can help/get help if there is an overdose.
- The individual using drugs as well as family and friends should all be trained on the signs and symptoms of a drug overdose, where to get naloxone, how to administer it, how to do rescue breathing, and the importance of calling 911 immediately, even when naloxone is administered.
- Do not leave the ambulance or hospital against medical advice after naloxone has been administered to reverse the overdose. The naloxone may wear off before the opioids wear off – and you could go into overdose again, with loss of consciousness and slowing or stoppage of breathing.

## Additional contributors

- Miami Valley Regional Crime Lab.
- Ohio State Highway Patrol Crime Lab.
- Lake County Crime Lab.
- Columbus Division of Police Crime Lab.
- Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation Drug Chemistry Unit.

## Substance use treatment and behavioral health services

Healthcare providers can help refer patients/clients who use illicit drugs to treatment, or Ohioans can call the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services toll-free helpline at 1-877-275-6364, available 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The local alcohol, drug addiction and mental health services board (ADAMH) in your community can also help connect Ohioans with low-cost behavioral health services. Find your local ADAMH board at [www.mha.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/mha/community-partners/adamh-boards](http://www.mha.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/mha/community-partners/adamh-boards).

The Ohio CareLine, at 1-800-720-9616, offers 24/7 access to trained behavioral health professionals who can offer confidential support in times of personal or family crisis when individuals may be struggling to cope with challenges in their lives. When callers need additional services, they will receive assistance and connection to local providers.

Ohioans can also access behavioral health treatment providers through [www.findtreatment.gov](http://www.findtreatment.gov).

## Additional resources

- Information on obtaining naloxone, including by mail order: [odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/project-dawn/project-dawn-programs](http://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/project-dawn/project-dawn-programs).
- [U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency \(DEA\) One Pill Can Kill: www.dea.gov/onepill](http://www.dea.gov/onepill).
- [DEA news release about counterfeit prescription tablets: www.dea.gov/press-releases/2021/09/27/dea-issues-public-safety-alert](http://www.dea.gov/press-releases/2021/09/27/dea-issues-public-safety-alert).



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[www.adamhssc.org](http://www.adamhssc.org)

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

March 18, 2022

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee:

The Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board of Cuyahoga County was an early leader in promoting harm reduction for individuals and families living with addiction and substance use disorders. We applaud Senator Huffman's sponsorship of Senate Bill 296, which would more clearly authorize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and would deregulate naloxone.

Fentanyl, a synthetic opioid 50 times stronger than heroin, is the leading cause of drug overdose deaths in Cuyahoga County and can be found combined with any drug including cocaine, crack, methamphetamine, and counterfeit pressed pills. Though the ADAMHS Board does not condone drug use, we know that providing fentanyl test strips and naloxone can help save the lives of individuals using drugs. This is especially important since fentanyl is causing so many fatalities and robbing individuals of the opportunity to seek treatment and begin a life in recovery.

The ADAMHS Board of Cuyahoga County has been a vocal advocate for fentanyl test strips and naloxone/Narcan distribution. In 2019, our community began grassroots partnerships to share education about these lifesaving harm reduction strategies in response to a large increase in overdose fatalities related to fentanyl in cocaine (72 fatalities in May of 2019, 50% of whom were African American).

Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, inexpensive, and highly accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl. Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior. Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive result on a fentanyl test strip were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.

Along with updating Ohio's law regarding fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a lifesaving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill broadens access to naloxone for all Ohioans. As a County that has been distributing naloxone to the community through grassroots efforts and naloxone emergency cabinets, this change helps remove barriers to distribution.

We strongly support the passage of SB 296 and know that it will save lives because the legislation expands access to important harm reduction tools necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our county and state.

Sincerely,

Scott S. Osiecki  
Chief Executive Officer  
Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board of Cuyahoga County



The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of BrightView Health to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

On behalf of BrightView Health, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,



Shawn Ryan, MD, MBA, ABEM, ABAM  
Chief Medical Officer



Navdeep Kang, Psy.D, HSP, CGP  
Chief Clinical Officer

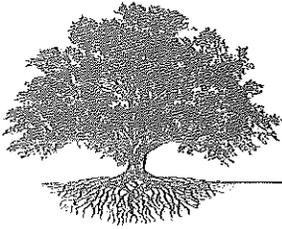
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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>ii</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onlc-120321>

<sup>iii</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>



*The* UNITED CHURCH *of* GRANVILLE  
*Historic Church, Progressive People*

March 21, 2022

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

We are writing on behalf of **the United Church of Granville** to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

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info@myucg.org  
unitedchurchgranville.org

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

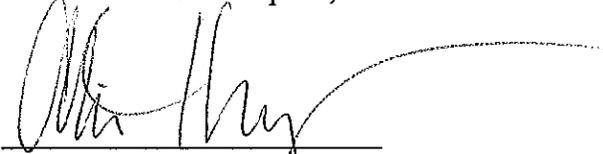
On behalf of the United Church of Granville we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,



Jeff Burkett, Board Moderator

Rev. Alissia J. Thompson, Pastor



<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>ii</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onic-120321>

<sup>iii</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/vebsite-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/vebsite-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of BirdieLight, a fentanyl education initiative, to express my support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts

naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

**The decriminalization of fentanyl test strips would allow the organization, BirdieLight, to apply for grant awards, and in particular would allow us to provide fentanyl test strips to young people who want to ensure a safe drug supply. While we educate always that drug avoidance is the safest route, we realize that young people also need the ability to test any substance for deadly fentanyl.**

On behalf of **BirdieLight** we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

*Adriana Castellanos*

Adriana Castellanos BSN, RN

Nurse Manager at Equitas Health

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>ii</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onc-120321>

<sup>iii</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>



RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of **Faith in Public Life** to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. Faith in Public Life has a network of over 3,000 people of faith in Ohio. We also convene the statewide harm reduction policy table where we connect clergy, harm reduction advocates, service providers and people who use drugs. This policy table has identified the expansion of naloxone access and the legalization of fentanyl testing strips as one of our top priorities. We know that if passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to save lives.

Senate Bill 296 would remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Because of barriers in the Ohio Revised Code and at the Board of Pharmacy, it took over 3 years to get our naloxone distribution program up and running. Even with significant legal support, paid staff time, relationships with legislators and overwhelming support from clergy, we still struggled with roadblock after roadblock. We are grateful to have had the opportunity to work with Cameron McNamee. With his support, we were finally able to launch our distribution program. However, many of the grassroots organizations we work with don't have access to these same resources and would never be able to establish their own distribution program, even though they are connected to those most in need.

Additionally, several of our partners have been threatened with arrest for distributing fentanyl testing strips as part of their outreach. Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. There are some cities and counties in Ohio that have very directly said that anyone found to possess fentanyl testing strips will be charged with possession of paraphernalia, even though public health departments in these same cities and counties regularly distribute fentanyl testing strips at events. The law should not be subjective. All Ohioans should be able to distribute this life saving tool without fear.

Simply put, it should not be this difficult to save a life. Something must change.

On behalf of Faith in Public Life, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to save the children of God.

Sincerely,

Minister Blyth Barnow  
Ohio Associate Director  
Faith in Public Life  
[bbarnow@faithinpubliclife.org](mailto:bbarnow@faithinpubliclife.org)  
440-220-2090

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE), a national non-profit research organization that has worked with Ohio communities for 20 years to build community capacity for evidence-based substance abuse prevention, treatment, and recovery activities. We fully support Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is a key step in reducing overdose deaths due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia. A number of rural communities we are

currently working with have identified fentanyl test strips as an important way to avoid overdose deaths; however, fear of prosecution due to Ohio's current laws have made the community leaders we are working with hesitant even to engage their partners and local law enforcement on this issue.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans. Ohio communities have worked hard over the last five years to expand naloxone distribution and this would help them further expand those efforts.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our strong and unqualified support of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in Ohio and will save lives. I welcome the opportunity to discuss this bill further with you or your staff and can be reached via email at [mcourser@pire.org](mailto:mcourser@pire.org) or via phone at (614) 746-5670.

Sincerely,



Matthew W. Courser  
Senior Research Scientist

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>ii</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onc-120321>

<sup>iii</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>



# HEARTLAND CONFERENCE

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
N. KY • OH • WV

March 20, 2022

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Heartland Conference of the United Church of Christ to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines. Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye. Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior. Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

The Heartland Conference of the United Church of Christ is currently actively working to help congregations in their response to realities of drug overdose so prevalent in all of our communities. This bill will significantly help in our work to keep people alive as we also help empower them to seek longer term solutions to addiction.

On behalf of the Heartland Conference of the United Church of Christ, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Rev. David Long-Higgins  
Conference Minister  
Heartland Conference, United Church of Christ  
614-309-2150  
[dave@heartlanducc.org](mailto:dave@heartlanducc.org)

PO BOX 1230  
WORTHINGTON, OH 43085  
800-282-0740  
[WWW.HEARTLANDUCC.ORG](http://WWW.HEARTLANDUCC.ORG)

March 22, 2022  
Dottie Fromal  
82 W. Columbus Avenue  
Nelsonville, OH 45764

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square  
1st Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I live in Nelsonville and am a member of First Presbyterian Church as well as a volunteer for Nelsonville Voices and Nelsonville Community Dinner. I am also a former member of Nelsonville City Council. My community stretches far and wide and I am writing to express my support for Senate Bill 296. This bill would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>2</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>3</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings.

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<sup>2</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio.

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Through my job, my volunteer activities and my church, I come in contact with many individuals and families that depend on naloxone and fentanyl testing strips to keep their loved ones safe. I personally have lost three cousins to drug overdoses and have a brother who has been struggling with a drug addiction for most of his life. I remember meeting you at the Nelsonville Public library. You brought your dog with you and you spent an hour with me talking about different issues that affect Nelsonville. You mentioned a relative of yours who shares a similar struggle, so I know you understand this need.

I, along with members of my congregation and other volunteer organizations strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Dottie Fromal

Volunteer

610-999-1385

[dfromal@gmail.com](mailto:dfromal@gmail.com)

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of **drughelp.care** to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

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DrugHelp.Care is a website created by a team of researchers and students at CSU that allows substance use treatment providers to register their services they provide. Once registered, the website allows agencies to update daily the number of available treatment slots and waitlist data they have. This website matches substance users with the best available treatment quickly and efficiently. We have recently expanded our website to include information on harm reduction services available in northeast Ohio, including locations where people can obtain naloxone and fentanyl testing strips.

On behalf of **drughelp.care** we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,



**Miyuki Fukushima Tedor, PhD**

Co-Creator of drughelp.care

Associate Professor

Department of Criminology, Anthropology, and Sociology

Cleveland State University

1860 East 22nd St., RT1733

Cleveland, OH 44115

216-687-4550 (office)

[m.fukushima@csuohio.edu](mailto:m.fukushima@csuohio.edu)

*Patricia Stoddard Dare*

**Patricia (Patty) Stoddard Dare, MSW, PhD**

Co-Creator of drughelp.care

Director Women's and Gender Studies

Coordinator Chemical Dependency Counseling Certificate Program

Co-Director, CSU T.E.C.H. Hub

Professor, School of Social Work

Cleveland State University

[p.stoddarddare@csuohio.edu](mailto:p.stoddarddare@csuohio.edu)



**Michelle Unangst, MSSA**

Community Outreach Consultant for drughelp.care

216-202-4106

[admin@drughelp.care](mailto:admin@drughelp.care)

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

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The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Community Action Committee of Pike County Project Dawn Program to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

On behalf of Community Action Committee of Pike County Project Dawn Program, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brad A." followed by a stylized, cursive signature.

Brandi A. Hawthorne

Community Action Committee of Pike County Project Dawn Program Coordinator

Bhawthorne@pikecac.org

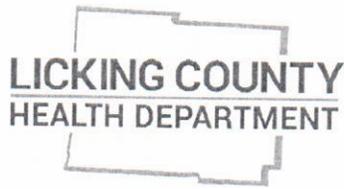
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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

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<sup>iv</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>



March 18, 2022

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Licking County Health Department to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines. Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye. Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

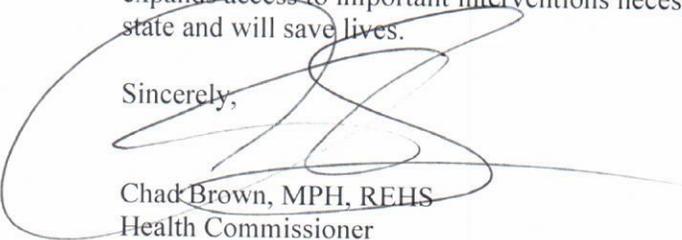
Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>1</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

In 2021, Licking County had 47 overdose fatalities, with over 72% of the cases containing fentanyl. LCHD's goal is to implement comprehensive community-based efforts to address drug use and misuse, and to reduce drug overdose fatalities by 10 percent by August 31, 2022, through various prevention activities.

On behalf of the Licking County Health Department, we support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,



Chad Brown, MPH, REHS  
Health Commissioner



## **Clermont County Public Health**

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

March 18, 2022

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Clermont County Public Health (CCPH) to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

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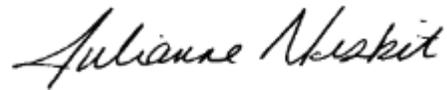
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In Clermont County, the number of unintentional drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl has continued to increase. In 2021, fentanyl was involved in 90% of Clermont's unintentional drug overdose deaths. In

collaboration with the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) and community partners, CCPH is working to develop policies and protocols, supporting systems, and environmental changes to reach the at-risk population and link them to community supports and appropriate services, including evidence-based treatment and naloxone. Legalizing fentanyl test strips and deregulating naloxone will help scale up the harm reduction programs to provide connections to services and care.

On behalf of Clermont County Public Health, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to essential interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julianne Nesbit". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Julianne Nesbit  
Health Commissioner

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

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As a professor and public health researcher who has conducted research with people who use drugs for over a decade, I can attest to the lifesaving power of naloxone, and the dire importance of its distribution among lay persons in the community. Furthermore, my own research on drug use and drug-related risk in the Dayton, Ohio metropolitan area has shown that, in cities such as Dayton, fentanyl has all but replaced heroin, creating new risks and strategies of risk avoidance among people who use drugs.<sup>1,2</sup> It is urgent that we respond with the necessary public health responses to curb the tide of unnecessary overdose death.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>2</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

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<sup>1</sup> Silverstein, S. M., Daniulaityte, R., Martins, S. S., Miller, S. C., & Carlson, R. G. (2019). "Everything is not right anymore": Buprenorphine experiences in an era of illicit fentanyl. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 74, 76-83.

<sup>2</sup> Daniulaityte, R., Silverstein, S. M., Getz, K., Juhascik, M., McElhinny, M., & Dudley, S. (2022). Lay knowledge and practices of methamphetamine use to manage opioid-related overdose risks. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 99, 103463.

<sup>3</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

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Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

As a public health professor and researcher with years of experience conducting research on the risks of drug use in a changing drug market, I strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,



Sydney M. Silverstein, PhD  
Assistant Professor  
Center for Interventions, Treatment, and Addictions Research  
Department of Population & Public Health Sciences  
Division of Addiction Medicine  
Wright State University Boonshoft School of Medicine  
937-775-1300  
sydney.silverstein@wright.edu

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<sup>6</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States.  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>

## Services Provided:

- Assessment
- Non-intensive Outpatient
- Intensive Outpatient
- Medication Assisted Treatment
- Prevention/Education
- Wellness Management
- Case Management
- Family Counseling
- Peer Support
- Drug Screens
- Pregnancy Testing
- Individual Counseling
- Group Counseling
- Crisis Intervention
- Med Somatic
- Drug Free Workplace Programming
- Steering Clear
- Remedial Driving

## Supported by:

Columbiana County Mental Health & Recovery Services Board

Jefferson County Prevention & Recovery Board

Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services (OhioMHAS)

Ohio Department of Job & Family Services

Department of Housing and Urban Development

Private & Third-Party Payment

## Certifications:

Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)

Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services (OhioMHAS)

A United Way Funded Agency:



United Way of Northern  
Columbiana County  
and  
Jefferson County United Way

Equal Opportunity Employer &  
Provider of Services

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of **Family Recovery Center** to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

**Services Provided:**

- Assessment
- Non-intensive Outpatient
- Intensive Outpatient
- Medication Assisted Treatment
- Prevention/Education
- Wellness Management
- Case Management
- Family Counseling
- Peer Support
- Drug Screens
- Pregnancy Testing
- Individual Counseling
- Group Counseling
- Crisis Intervention
- Med Somatic
- Drug Free Workplace Programming
- Steering Clear
- Remedial Driving

**Supported by:**

Columbiana County Mental Health & Recovery Services Board

Jefferson County Prevention & Recovery Board

Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services (OhioMHAS)

Ohio Department of Job & Family Services

Department of Housing and Urban Development

Private & Third-Party Payment

**Certifications:**

Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)

Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services (OhioMHAS)

A United Way Funded Agency:



United Way of Northern  
Columbiana County  
and  
Jefferson County United Way

Equal Opportunity Employer &  
Provider of Services

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Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

**We feel it would open up availability of distribution to community members and local business in the Columbiana County area that has been designated one of the hard hit areas for overdose.**

On behalf of **Family Recovery Center**, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,



Eloise V. Traina, CEO

<sup>1</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings.

<https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>2</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onlc-120321>

<sup>3</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S09555395918302135>



## **GEAUGA PUBLIC HEALTH**

*Promoting and Protecting Community Health*

470 Center St., Building 8, Chardon, OH 44024-1071  
440.279.1900      www.gphohio.org

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The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of **Geauga Public Health** to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

This legislation has a positive impact on the work Geauga Public Health does and it benefits our community. For instance, below is the information that I was able to pull from EpiCenter: a syndromic surveillance system used by LHDs and Ohio Department of Health in order to get data from participating hospitals in real time.

In the past 90 days (from 3/17/2022)

7 opioid drug (any type) overdoses that visited the emergency department, out of a total of 5,476 total emergency department visits. This accounts for <1% of emergency department visits in Geauga County

In the past 365 days (from 3/17/2022)

22 opioid drug (any type) overdoses that visited the emergency department, out of a total of 24,794 total emergency department visits. This accounts for <1 % of emergency department visits in Geauga County

In the past 90 days (from 3/17/2022)

7 opioid drug (any type) overdoses that visited the emergency department, out of a total of 28 overdoses that visited the emergency department. This accounts for 25% of all overdoses that visit the emergency department in Geauga County

In the past 365 days (from 3/17/2022)

22 opioid drug (any type) overdoses that visited the emergency department, out of a total of 62 overdoses that visited the emergency department. This accounts for 16.4% of all overdoses that visit the emergency department in Geauga County

This statistics give evidence of the continual need for community accessibility to narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone of naloxone.

On behalf of **Geauga Public Health**, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Carol Straniero, BSN, RN, BA  
Director Population Health/Nursing

---

<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>ii</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onic-120321>

<sup>iii</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Nelsonville Voices to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>2</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

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Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid

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<sup>1</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings.

<https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>2</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio.

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overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

At Nelsonville Voices, we have spent the past 9 months surveying our neighbors on the issues most important to their lives. Drug use is the top issue that people have named, and we have learned through weekly distribution events of harm reduction supplies such as naloxone and fentanyl test strips that increasing access to such life-saving tools is a top priority for making Nelsonville a safer and healthier place for all. Senate Bill 296 will help our organization to have fewer hurdles to cross when distributing supplies like naloxone, and also for our neighbors and loved ones to deal with less stigma and risk that is often associated with substance use.

On behalf of Nelsonville Voices, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Drea Reany  
Southeast Ohio Field Organizer  
Nelsonville Voices/Showing Up for Racial Justice Ohio  
[drea@surjaction.org](mailto:drea@surjaction.org)  
(419) 277-2432

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Community Medical Services to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>2</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

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Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid

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<sup>1</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings.

<https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

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[https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>

overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

Every Ohioan deserves the opportunity to save a life and make a positive impact curbing the tide of preventable overdoses deaths.

On behalf of Community Medical Services, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Plymale  
Peer Support Specialist  
614-488-7117  
[Suzanne.plymale@msgiveshope.com](mailto:Suzanne.plymale@msgiveshope.com)





***A Network of Care for All Generations!***

**Board Website:** [www.mental-health-recovery.org](http://www.mental-health-recovery.org)  
**Network of Care:** [www.portage.oh.networkofcare.org](http://www.portage.oh.networkofcare.org)

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Mental Health & Recovery Board of Portage County to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

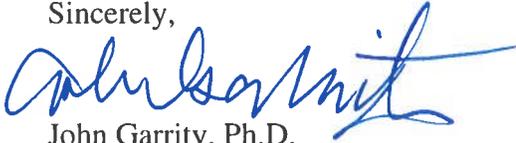
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155 East Main Street  
PO Box 743, Kent, OH 44240-0014  
**PHONE:** (330) 673-1756 **FAX:** (330) 673-1330 **EMAIL:** [mhrbpc@gwis.com](mailto:mhrbpc@gwis.com)  
**VOICE/TTY:** (330) 678-4357 or 1-866-449-8518  
The Board offers equal employment and service opportunities.

In Portage County, there has been a rise in deaths due to street drugs being mixed with fentanyl. The numbers climbed in 2021 to 43 people dying in a county with a population of only 162,466. The Mental Health & Recovery Board believes that being able to alert people to the dangers of fentanyl and providing tools for them to test drugs and access naloxone without the stigma and worry of being criminalized is critical. We believe that everyone always deserves another chance to achieve recovery.

On behalf of the Mental Health & Recovery Board of Portage County we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Garrity".

John Garrity, Ph.D.

Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>2</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onc-120321>

<sup>3</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>



**Third Street Family Health Services**

600 W. Third Street  
Mansfield, Ohio 44906  
P: 419-522-6191

**Cornerstone OB-GYN**

770 Balgreen Drive, Suite 207  
Mansfield, Ohio 44906  
P: 419-522-6800

**Mansfield Family Health**

270 Sterkel Blvd., Suite A  
Mansfield, Ohio 44907  
P: 419-525-6737

**Hawkins Medical Center**

2131 Park Ave. West, Suite 200  
Ontario, Ohio 44906  
P: 419-525-6730

**Five Points Primary Care**

200 Park Ave. West  
Mansfield, Ohio 44902  
P: 419-522-2239

**Shelby Health & Wellness Center**

31 E. Main Street  
Shelby, Ohio 44875  
P: 419-525-6795

**Community Health Worker**

120 Sturges Ave.  
Mansfield, Ohio 44903  
P: 419-525-2555

**Bucyrus Health and Wellness Center**

2458 Stetzer Rd., Unit A  
Bucyrus, Ohio 44820  
P: 419-834-8889

**Malabar Care Connect**

205 W. Cook Rd., Unit A  
Mansfield, Ohio 44907  
P: 567-309-7333

**Ashland Health and Wellness Center**

309 Arthur Street  
Ashland, Ohio 44805  
P: 567-217-7778

**9th Street Dental**

431 E. 9th Street  
Ashland, Ohio 44805  
P: 567-217-7040



March 21, 2022

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of **Third Street Family Health Services** to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

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Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

**Third Street Family Health Services is an FQHC located in Mansfield, Ohio, with several offices throughout Richland, Ashland, and Crawford counties. We offer Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) programs throughout the company and have done so for nine years. Practicing harm reduction while encouraging steps to a drug-free recovery, in tandem with counseling and wraparound care services, defines our program. We have witnessed first-hand the increase of overdose deaths and the intensely addictive nature of fentanyl as it is being sold alone, added, or substituted for opiates.**

On behalf of **Third Street Family Health Services**, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,



Peggy Anderson  
President & CEO

---

<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

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<sup>iv</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>

# Addiction Services Council

2828 Vernon Place  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219  
Phone: 513-281-7880  
Fax: 513-281-7884  
24/7 Helpline  
513-281-RHAC (7422)

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Hamilton County Mental Health  
& Recovery Services



The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Addiction Services Council to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

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Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

This legislation would benefit the work that the Addiction Services Council does because our staff spend a tremendous amount of time performing street outreach, criminal justice, education, and prevention activities. If staff were able to easily access, distribute, and provide education related to test strips and naloxone, more at-risk individuals in our community would have access to these life-saving items. We work every day to prevent the loss of life and we desperately need the legalization and deregulation of these items to achieve our mission.

On behalf of the Addiction Services Council, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Lisa Mertz  
President and CEO

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<sup>1</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>1</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onlc-120321>

<sup>1</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>1</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the ADAMHS Board of Tuscarawas and Carroll Counties to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

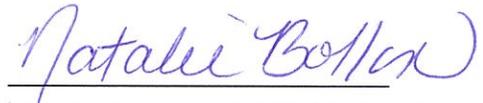
Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

Tuscarawas and Carroll Counties have done a significant amount of work prior to and over the course of the course of the opiate epidemic to impact addiction in our communities. We continue to lose sons, daughters, siblings, mothers and fathers to this deadly disease. Allowing the dissemination of a tool like

fentanyl test strips gives those addicted one more opportunity to engage in treatment services and move toward recovery.

On behalf of the ADAMHS Board of Tuscarawas and Carroll Counties, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Natalie Bolter". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>ii</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onlc-120321>

<sup>iii</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>

March 16, 2022

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of myself to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

This intervention would allow my staff and physicians more ready access to provide fentanyl test strips as a teaching and learning tool and active harm reduction to those who engage in both casual and regular use of drugs.

I strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Allison Macerollo, MD

Signed electronically

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>ii</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onc-120321>

<sup>iii</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>



The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Academy of Medicine of Cleveland & Northern Ohio (AMCNO) to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such

as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

On behalf of AMCNO, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jen Johns". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jen Johns, MPH

Executive Director

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>ii</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onc-120321>

<sup>iii</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>



## ASHLAND COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of The Ashland County Health Department to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines. Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye. Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior. Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.

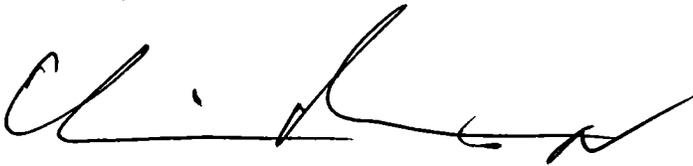
Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

Opioids are a big problem in our small community. Lives are lost every year to the opioid crisis and more overdoses could be prevented with easier access to Naloxone. The use of Fentanyl test strips also may change a person decision to use based on it being more potent than they expected. We have an opioid crisis; we don't have to condone the use, but we should try our best to minimize the lives lost.

On behalf of The Ashland County Health Department, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Bivens", written in a cursive style.

Chris Bivens RN, BSN  
Director of Nursing  
Ashland County Health Department



The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215  
RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Cannabis For Children International to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines. Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye. Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior. Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

Cannabis For Children International advocates for safety awareness, education, and open communication. Allowing better access of monitoring strips and rescue medications is vital in saving lives.

On behalf of Cannabis For Children International, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our State and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Alissa Lee, Founder

[www.cannabisforchildren.org](http://www.cannabisforchildren.org)



**Ashtabula County Health Department**  
12 West Jefferson Street  
Jefferson, Ohio 44047

Jay Becker, M.P.H.  
Health Commissioner

Telephone: 440.576.6010  
Fax: 440.576.5527

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

March 15, 2022

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Ashtabula County Health Department to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines. Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye. Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior. Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

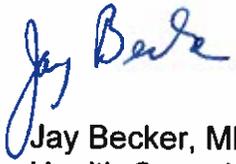
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**Equal Provider of Services**  
**Equal Opportunity Employer**

**Ashtabula County is one of 23 counties that make up of 80% of opioid fatality's in Ohio. In 2021 we have had 22 fentanyl related deaths and 7 still pending in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter. Fentanyl overdoses have been a consistent within the high 20s over the last few years. We have seen an increase in methamphetamine/overdoses that are fentanyl related. Bill 296 being passed is what we need to get that number down, and save the county costs due to the high prices that overdoses pose.**

On behalf of Ashtabula County Health Department, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,



Jay Becker, MPH  
Health Commissioner



Dave Shumate, BSN, RN  
Director of Nursing



Ian Elliott  
Naloxone Educator

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of myself, a public health graduate student at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, to express my support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>2</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>3</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>4</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid

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<sup>1</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>2</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onc-120321>

<sup>3</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>

overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

Having previously worked as a counselor at an Opioid Treatment Program in Ohio, Community Medical Services, I know that this policy could save lives of the people I used to serve and Ohioans in general. No one should be liable for penalties for using protective equipment such as fentanyl test strips, particularly amid a skyrocketing overdose rate driven primarily by fentanyl. Additionally, every single Ohioan should be encouraged to carry the lifesaving medication that naloxone is and removing regulatory barriers will greatly increase access and save lives. This policy will empower Ohioans to protect themselves and their fellow citizens amid an incredibly deadly overdose crisis.

I strongly support the passage of SB 296 and thank you for your consideration of this important policy. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Avery Meyer".

Avery Meyer, BS  
Graduate student  
614-571-9077  
Ameyer35@jh.edu

## BOARD OF HEALTH

### BELMONT COUNTY GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT

68501 Bannock Road • St. Clairsville, Ohio 43950 • Phone (740) 695-1202 • Fax (740) 695-8890

[www.BelmontCountyHealth.com](http://www.BelmontCountyHealth.com)



The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of The Belmont County Health Department to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

We have been distributing naloxone to community members since 2015. In 2021 alone, we distributed over 300 kits to friends and families of individuals who use opioids as well as professionals who serve

**BOARD OF HEALTH**  
**BELMONT COUNTY GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT**



68501 Bannock Road • St. Clairsville, Ohio 43950 • Phone (740) 695-1202 • Fax (740) 695-8890

[www.BelmontCountyHealth.com](http://www.BelmontCountyHealth.com)

them. However, we are continuing to see a rise in reported overdoses and deaths, partially due to fentanyl presence in combination with other drugs, including marijuana.

On behalf of **the Belmont County Health Department**, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Linda Mehl, RN, BSN

Project Dawn Coordinator

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>ii</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onc-120321>

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The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of BirdieLight, a fentanyl education initiative, to express my support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

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**The decriminalization of fentanyl test strips would allow this organization, BirdieLight, to apply for grant awards, and in particular would provide fentanyl test strips to young people who want to ensure a safe drug supply. While we educate always that drug avoidance is the safest route, we realize that young people also need the ability to test any substance for deadly fentanyl.**

I strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Dr. Tonya Schuetz, RN, LSN

Columbus City Schools

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On behalf of **BirdieLight** we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Tara Doland, RN, CNP

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<sup>[i]</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

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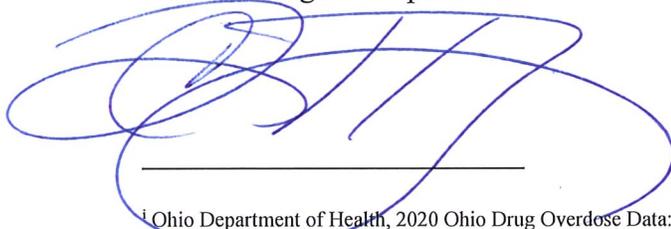
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Sincerely,

Christopher H. Hetzer MSN, BSN, RN

Nurse Manager at Equitas Health



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On behalf of **BirdieLight** I strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Chris Morford BSN, RN, Licensed School Nurse

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
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1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

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Sincerely,

Beth Weinstock MD

Founder and CEO of BirdieLight

Birdielight.org

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**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Canton City Public Health**

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

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Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse



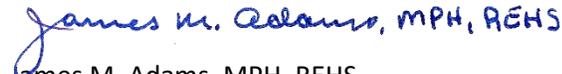
420 Market Ave., N ◦ Canton, OH 44702  
Phone 330-489-3231 ◦ Fax 330-489-3335 ◦ [www.CantonHealth.org](http://www.CantonHealth.org)

*This agency is an equal provider of services and an equal opportunity employer.  
Promoting and protecting health since 1849.*

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On behalf of Canton City Public Health, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,



James M. Adams, MPH, REHS

Health Commissioner

330-438-4623

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The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
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Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing as a member of the Ohio Substance Use Disorder Professionals group to express my support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

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overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

As I have worked in the field of substance abuse for approximately three years now, I can say that enacting this bill into law would be invaluable to those continuing to struggle with substance use disorder in Ohio. On a personal note, I am sure that many former clients that I have encountered may still be alive if additional harm reduction measures like this were put into place.

As a member of the Ohio Substance Use Disorder Professionals group, I strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Melinda Barth LCD CIII  
Melinda Barth



1380 Dublin Rd Suite 100

Columbus, Ohio 43215

CommunityMedicalService.org

P 614-488-7117 F 614-488-7118

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

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#### Prohibition on Rediscovery

THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN DISCLOSED TO YOU FROM RECORDS PROTECTED BY FEDERAL CONFIDENTIALITY RULES (42 CFR PART 2). THE FEDERAL RULES PREVENT YOU FROM MAKING ANY FURTHER DISCLOSURE OF THIS INFORMATION UNLESS FURTHER DISCLOSURE IS EXPRESSLY PERMITTED BY WRITTEN CONSENT OF THE PERSON TO WHOM IT PERTAINS OR AS AUTHORIZED BY 42 CFR PART 2. A GENERAL AUTHORIZATION FOR THE RELEASE OF MEDICAL RECORDS IS **NOT** SUFFICIENT FOR THIS PURPOSE. THE FEDERAL RULES RESTRICT ANY USE OF THIS INFORMATION TO CRIMINALLY INVESTIGATE OR PROSECUTE ANY ALCOHOL OR DRUG ABUSE PATIENT.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

This bill passing would help our clientele not getting punished for carrying life-saving supplies. It would allow for easier access and distribution of these life-saving supplies as well.

On behalf of Community Medical Services we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

C. Ryan Perdue  
Clinician  
614.488.7117

[Christopher.perdue@cmsgiveshope.com](mailto:Christopher.perdue@cmsgiveshope.com)

#### Prohibition on Redisclosure

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The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of BirdieLight, a fentanyl education initiative, to express my support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

**The decriminalization of fentanyl test strips would allow this organization, BirdieLight, to apply for grant awards, and in particular would provide fentanyl test strips to young people who want to ensure a safe drug supply. While we educate always that drug avoidance is the safest route, we realize that young people also need the ability to test any substance for deadly fentanyl.**

I strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Sarah Bartczak RN

Columbus City Schools

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>ii</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onlc-120321>

<sup>iii</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

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Columbus, OH 43215

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Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

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**The decriminalization of fentanyl test strips would allow BirdieLight to apply for grant awards, and in particular would allow us to provide fentanyl test strips to young people who want to ensure a safe drug supply. While we educate always that drug avoidance is the safest route, we realize that young people also need the ability to test any substance for deadly fentanyl.**

**I have been a registered professional nurse in the state of Ohio for nearly 24 years with many of those years spent providing direct patient care in Emergency Departments in Columbus, Ohio. In**

**my professional opinion, I strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will MOST IMPORTANTLY save lives.**

Sincerely,

*Jeannette H. Eveland RN*

Jeannette H. Eveland MSA, BSN, RN, LSN Supervisor



Office of Health, Family & Community Services

Department of Student Services

430 Cleveland Avenue, Columbus, OH 43215

**o: 614.365.5824 e: [jeveland5505@columbus.k12.oh.us](mailto:jeveland5505@columbus.k12.oh.us)**

*“one day or day one, you decide” – author unknown*

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

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The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Thrive Peer Recovery Services to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>2</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

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Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid

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<sup>1</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings.

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overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

This would allow our employees, Ohio Certified Peer Recovery Supporters, be able to increase our distribution of naloxone and to utilize distribution of fentanyl test strips with the people we are working with and in our Harm Reduction efforts, which may help to reduce overdoses and the fatalities we see with regard to overdose.

On behalf of **Thrive Peer Recovery Services**, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CDJ', with a stylized flourish at the end.

China Darrington  
Director of Advocacy and Public Policy  
Thrive Peer Recovery Services  
[cdarrington@thrivepeersupport.com](mailto:cdarrington@thrivepeersupport.com)

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am a physician writing to express my support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

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I strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Kristin M. Foley, MD

Bexley, OH

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

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<sup>iii</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

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The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of **drughelp.care** to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

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Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

DrugHelp.Care is a website created by a team of researchers and students at CSU that allows substance use treatment providers to register their services they provide. Once registered, the website allows agencies to update daily the number of available treatment slots and waitlist data they have. This website matches substance users with the best available treatment quickly and efficiently. We have recently expanded our website to include information on harm reduction services available in northeast Ohio, including locations where people can obtain naloxone and fentanyl testing strips.

On behalf of **drughelp.care** we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,



**Miyuki Fukushima Tedor, PhD**

Co-Creator of drughelp.care

Associate Professor

Department of Criminology, Anthropology, and Sociology

Cleveland State University

1860 East 22nd St., RT1733

Cleveland, OH 44115

216-687-4550 (office)

[m.fukushima@csuohio.edu](mailto:m.fukushima@csuohio.edu)

*Patricia Stoddard Dare*

**Patricia (Patty) Stoddard Dare, MSW, PhD**

Co-Creator of drughelp.care

Director Women's and Gender Studies

Coordinator Chemical Dependency Counseling Certificate Program

Co-Director, CSU T.E.C.H. Hub

Professor, School of Social Work

Cleveland State University

[p.stoddarddare@csuohio.edu](mailto:p.stoddarddare@csuohio.edu)



**Michelle Unangst, MSSA**

Community Outreach Consultant for drughelp.care

216-202-4106

[admin@drughelp.care](mailto:admin@drughelp.care)

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

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The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of **Emerge Recovery and Trade Initiative** to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>2</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>3</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>4</sup>

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Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid

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overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

Emerge Recovery and Trade Initiative has already been a supporter of naloxone distribution evidenced by our participation in the HEALing Communities efforts. So this legislation fits our mission to assist individuals to both find and sustain recovery!

On behalf of Emerge Recovery and Trade Initiative, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

*GDelaney*

Pastor Greg Delaney  
Director of Recovery Services  
9373976423

[greg.delaney@woodhavenohio.com](mailto:greg.delaney@woodhavenohio.com)

<https://www.emergerecoverytrade.com>

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Equitas Health to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.

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Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving

drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

As we continue to see lives lost to overdose each day in Ohio, we know that each death is preventable through interventions including naloxone and fentanyl test strips. This legislation would remove important barriers to these resources for thousands of individuals we serve through our harm reduction program in Franklin County and our health care centers and outreach programs around the state.

On behalf of Equitas Health, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,



Karin Sabey  
Chief Health Officer  
(614) 572-0896  
karinsabey@equitashealth.com

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

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On behalf of the citizens of Ohio, I strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Chad Braun, MD

CMO, Equitas Health

Equitashealth.com

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>ii</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onc-120321>

<sup>iii</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the non profit group Broken No More/GRASP (Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing) to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines. Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye. Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior. Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

GRASP is a National organization whose sole purpose is to provide a safe space for grief support to those who have had a loved one die due to substance use. We have a Facebook page of over 13,000 members and 125 face to face chapter groups who meet across the United States and Canada. Many of our loved ones would still be here if this legislation had passed years ago. This legislation would also show families and their loved ones who have substance use issues their lives are valuable and in Ohio we care.

On behalf of GRASP, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Laura Cash

Board of Directors, Broken No More/ GRASP

Chapter Coordinator, GRASP

419-722-2759

[ljs1615@aol.com](mailto:ljs1615@aol.com)

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of **Marion Public Health** to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

On behalf of **Marion Public Health**, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely, 

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing to express my support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

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Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

I strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,



**Michael B. Weinstock, MD**

Emergency Medicine attending physician, Adena Health System  
Director of Research and CME, IRB chair, Adena Health System  
Professor of Emergency Medicine, Adjunct, The Wexner Medical Center at The Ohio State University

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>ii</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onc-120321>

<sup>iii</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>



The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of North Central Ohio Harm Reduction to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would remove regulatory barriers to our efforts to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations like ours fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

North Central Ohio Harm Reduction is a community non-profit advocating for and promoting the health of people who use drugs. North Central Ohio Harm Reduction has distributed over 200 naloxone kits to people who use drugs in the North Central Ohio despite starting our operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. We plan to expand our services in 2022, and this legislation will allow us to provide fentanyl testing strips to our clients when requested. Our organization considers this a critical piece of legislation to promote the health of our community.

On behalf of North Central Ohio Harm Reduction, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,



Anne Joudrey  
Board President  
North Central Ohio Harm Reduction



Paul Joudrey  
Board Secretary  
North Central Ohio Harm Reduction

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>ii</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onc-120321>

<sup>iii</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>



# NEW PHILADELPHIA MUNICIPAL COURT

*Judge Nanette DeGarmo Von Allman • Julie A. Stamets, Clerk of Court*

166 EAST HIGH AVENUE, NEW PHILADELPHIA, OHIO 44663  
PHONE: (330) 343-6797 • FAX: (330) 364-6885 • WWW.NPMUNICIPALCOURT.ORG

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

March 16, 2022

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the New Philadelphia Municipal Recovery Court, an Ohio Supreme Court certified drug treatment docket, to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

On behalf of NPMRC we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Judge Nanette DeGarmo VonAllman

New Philadelphia Municipal Court



March 21, 2022

The Honorable Stephen Huffman  
Ohio Senate  
1 Capitol Square, 2nd Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - SB 296

Dear Chairman Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

On behalf of the members of the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities, I am writing to express our support for SB 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

OACBHA strongly supports the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,



Cheri L. Walter  
Chief Executive Officer

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>ii</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onc-120321>

<sup>iii</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of **Ohio University's Athens Campus Overdose Prevention Task Force** to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

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Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

**The Overdose Prevention Task Force is a national organization created by the Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA) which strives to eliminate overdose deaths around the country through Osteopathic Medical Student advocacy and action. One of the ways we do this is by educating and training the communities we serve and will continue to serve about naloxone. Being in south eastern Ohio which is an epicenter for the opioid epidemic this effort is even more crucial. By removing the restrictions on distribution and administration of naloxone, this will**

**allow us as an organization to educate more communities in south east Ohio and will undoubtedly save lives. As future physicians it is our duty to take action to fight this epidemic especially knowing that the number one cause of death in persons aged 18-45 is from fentanyl overdose.**

On behalf of **Ohio University's Athens Campus Overdose Prevention Task Force**, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nathan Grege". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>ii</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onlc-120321>

<sup>iii</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>



PREVENTING TOBACCO ADDICTION FOUNDATION

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye. Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior. Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

Our organization deals every day with addiction to another drug, nicotine, and we know that only through a concerted, thoughtful effort can we mitigate the impact of dangerous, addictive drugs on our kids, whether they are peddled by street pushers or legal drug cartels like the tobacco companies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Crane'.

Rob Crane, MD  
President



[rivervalleyorganizing.org](http://rivervalleyorganizing.org)  
[facebook.com/rivervalleyorganizing](https://facebook.com/rivervalleyorganizing)

**Portsmouth Office**  
1656 Gallia St, Portsmouth, OH 45662

**East Liverpool Office**  
506 Walnut St, East Liverpool, OH 43920



The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of River Valley Organizing to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>2</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>3</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>4</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil

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<sup>1</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings.

<https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>2</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio.

<https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onc-120321>

<sup>3</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study.

[https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>



[rivervalleyorganizing.org](http://rivervalleyorganizing.org)  
[facebook.com/rivervalleyorganizing](https://facebook.com/rivervalleyorganizing)

**Portsmouth Office**  
1656 Gallia St, Portsmouth, OH 45662

**East Liverpool Office**  
506 Walnut St, East Liverpool, OH 43920



penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

This legislation would positively impact our communities because it would save lives by stopping preventable overdoses.

On behalf of River Valley Organizing, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Kinsey Kandray  
Deputy Director  
330-921-5581  
[kinsey@rivervalleyorganizing.org](mailto:kinsey@rivervalleyorganizing.org)

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Gwendolyn J. Wilder  
Dennis Williams  
Barry Willison

Neil F. Tilow  
PRESIDENT/CEO

March 15, 2022

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

Please accept this letter in support of Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl related overdose deaths in the state.

With illicit fentanyl involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, we need every tool available to check drugs for the presence of fentanyl. Fentanyl test strips are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl, are easy to use, and cost effective. Senate Bill 296 would remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia, reducing fear of potential criminal and civil penalties to utilizing a lifesaving tool.

Senate Bill 296 also removes barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to all Ohioans. Talbert House has been proud to furnish Narcan across Southwest Ohio since 2014. We have furnished almost 30,000 lifesaving naloxone kits to clients, family, staff and caring community members. Reducing barriers to access is a critical harm reduction strategy.

On behalf of the staff, clients and families served by Talbert House I strongly support the passage of SB 296.

Sincerely,



Neil F. Tilow  
President/CEO



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Tuscarawas County  
Health Department

March 16, 2022

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Tuscarawas County Health Department to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align

 897 E. Iron Ave.  
Dover, OH 44622

 (330) 343-5555  
 (330) 343-1601

 [www.tchdnow.org](http://www.tchdnow.org)  
 [director@tchdnow.org](mailto:director@tchdnow.org)



Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

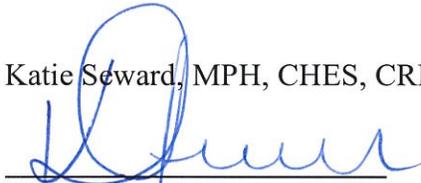
Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

Furthermore, the passage of SB 296 would complement the work our department conducts to distribute Naloxone through our Project DAWN Program. In 2021, our staff distributed 461 Narcan kits and recorded 41 overdose reversals.

On behalf of the Tuscarawas County Health Department, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Katie Seward, MPH, CHES, CRHCP



<sup>1</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>11</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onic-120321>

<sup>111</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>111</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Hope in Fostoria to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

We have seen drugs devastate our community. We need to be looking forward, what we have been doing is not working. Fentanyl test strips and naloxone save lives.

On behalf of **Hope in Fostoria** we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

**Stephanie Churella, CDCA**

Recovery Coordinator, H.O.P.E. in Fostoria

House Manager, Lotus Recovery House

567-207-8117

[recoverysupport@hopeinfostoria.com](mailto:recoverysupport@hopeinfostoria.com)

[www.hopeinfostoria.com](http://www.hopeinfostoria.com)

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>ii</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onc-120321>

<sup>iii</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of BirdieLight, a fentanyl education initiative, to express my support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

**The decriminalization of fentanyl test strips would allow this organization, BirdieLight, to apply for grant awards, and in particular would provide fentanyl test strips to young people who want to ensure a safe drug supply. While we educate always that drug avoidance is the safest route, we realize that young people also need the ability to test any substance for deadly fentanyl.**

I strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Blair RN

Columbus City Schools

---

<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>ii</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onc-120321>

<sup>iii</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>



4138 Hamilton Avenue  
Cincinnati, OH 45223

p 513.761.1480  
caracole.org

positively changing lives  
in the fight against HIV/AIDS

March 18, 2022

by EMAIL

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The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Caracole, Inc, to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Caracole is Southwest Ohio's nonprofit devoted to positively changing lives in the fight against HIV/AIDS. For people living with HIV, we provide housing, case management and pharmacy services to improve health and well-being. Our prevention services focus on outreach, testing, education and harm reduction. The work we do to end the HIV epidemic and to prevent overdose is central to a healthy community.

Senate Bill 296 will remove barriers to the distribution and administration of life-saving naloxone and fentanyl test strips. They will allow regular citizens to support the mission by distributing these safety supplies without risk of arrest. Making these supplies widely available is essential to protect Ohio citizens from overdose and to enable them to take steps toward harm reduction and health.

On behalf of Caracole, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. **SB 296 will save lives.**

Sincerely,

*Rina Saperstein*

Rina Saperstein, MPA  
Director of Operations,  
Caracole  
513-948-2711 [rsaperstein@caracole.org](mailto:rsaperstein@caracole.org)

cc: Faith Blynow, Faith in Action; Ohio Harm Reduction Coalition



The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

March 21, 2022

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Interact for Health to support decriminalization of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, (FTS). These test strips have the potential to reduce overdose deaths by identifying the presence of fentanyl and fentanyl analogs. Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs. Current law limits distribution of FTS to health departments through a syringe services program. By decriminalizing fentanyl test strips, Ohio has the potential to help reduce overdose deaths and to align with other states, such as Indiana, who do not criminalize FTS.

Interact for Health is a Cincinnati-based health foundation serving the eight Ohio counties: Hamilton, Clermont, Adams, Brown, Highland, Clinton, Warren and Butler. Since 2018, Interact for Health has supported community-level efforts to reduce overdose deaths due to opioids, including implementation of the first Quick Response Teams in the country, syringe service programs in five SW Ohio counties, telehealth and transportation programs to remove barriers to treatment, the first-ever gap analysis for recovery housing in our region, and trauma-informed programs to support children and adolescents who have been affected by addiction. Since the onset of these efforts, the Greater Cincinnati area has seen a *14% decrease* in overdoses compared to a *30% increase* nationally.

Providing access to distribute and possess fentanyl test strips for individuals to check for the presence of fentanyl is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. As you may know, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs. Additionally, African American males have the highest rate of overdose deaths in Ohio due to unintentional ingestion of fentanyl. Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl. Fentanyl testing with FTS is a best practice to reduce overdose deaths per the Center for Disease Control. In accordance, federal funding streams to support harm reduction services allow for the purchase of fentanyl test strips with grant dollars.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of persons who use drugs, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>i</sup> Another study, conducted by Research Triangle Institute, concluded that individuals who reported a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to change drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>ii</sup>

In addition to decriminalization of fentanyl test strips, Interact for Health supports efforts to remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. Exempting naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws broadens and eases access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

We greatly appreciate your consideration of these important issues and efforts to best support the health of Ohio residents. Interact for Health is available to provide additional information regarding fentanyl test strips, the aforementioned projects, and other matters regarding opioid use disorder. If we can be helpful in responding to any questions or clarifications, please feel free to contact Sonya Carrico at [scarrico@interactforhealth.org](mailto:scarrico@interactforhealth.org), who leads our organization's efforts to reduce opioid overdoses. State efforts to expand access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state will save lives. Thanks so much for your thoughtful attention to these matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Schroeder".

Kate Schroeder, CEO and President  
Interact for Health

---

<sup>i</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of myself, Billy Golden to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines. Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye. Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior. Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

I have worked in the harm reduction community of Cincinnati since 2015 and have known so many people that have died from drug overdose. People that might still be alive if they had full access to more life-saving harm reduction tools such as fentanyl test strips and Naloxone. By removing all barriers to access fentanyl test strips and naloxone, this legislation will help increase community distribution and therefore save more lives.

On behalf of myself, Billy Golden, I strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Billy Golden

Billy Golden  
513-702-5581  
billy.cincyep@gmail.com



*A journey and a destination. Recovery happens here!*

The P.E.E.R. Center  
Administrative Offices  
205 N. Hamilton Rd  
Columbus, Ohio 43213  
614.453.4830  
fax 614.453.4845

PEER East  
205 N. Hamilton Rd  
Columbus, Ohio 43213  
614.453.4830

PEER West  
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PEER WarmLine  
(614)358-TALK (8255)

[www.thepeercenter.org](http://www.thepeercenter.org)

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March 21, 2022

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

**RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296**

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee, I am writing on behalf of **The P.E.E.R. Center**, a drop in wellness, recovery, and support center for persons living with mental health, addiction, and trauma concerns in Columbus, Ohio, to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state



*A journey and a destination. Recovery happens here!*

Pg. 2

law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

**Until very recently, The P.E.E.R. Center struggled for many years to have access to these lifesaving tools, such as Naloxone. Because we are a non-medical, community based program, the need to have licensed medical professionals to sign off on ordering and distribution paperwork, has limited our access, and potentially blocked our ability to get and have these tools readily available for the population we serve. Because the people we serve literally drop-in for services and support, this increases our ability to get other life-saving tools into the hands of those who will use them. Recovery is a process of change. Change takes time. Eliminating barriers to making change is worthy of our focused attention.**

On behalf of **The P.E.E.R. Center, which is 100% staffed by persons in long-term recovery**, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Juliet C. Dorris-Williams, MSW, LISW-S  
Executive Director  
The P.E.E.R. Center



*A journey and a destination. Recovery happens here!*

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>ii</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onc-120321>

<sup>iii</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of **Pike County Court/Project Dawn Site** to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

The punishments for using or selling illicit drugs won't be changed, but by giving users access to this strip, 81% of them will routinely test their drugs, potentially changing the habits of drugs users to possibly not using anymore at all.

On behalf of **Pike County Court/Project Dawn Site** we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,



Judge Anthony A. Moraleja

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<sup>1</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

<sup>11</sup> Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center Warns of Dangerous Counterfeit Prescription Tablets Found in Ohio. <https://publicsafety.ohio.gov/news-and-events/all-news/onc-120321>

<sup>111</sup> Fentanyl Overdose Reduction Checking Analysis Study. [https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_032018.pdf](https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/website-media/resources/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395918302135>



The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman

Senate Building

1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor

Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

3/17/2022

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Miami County Public Health to express our support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

Dennis R. Propes, REHS, MPA  
Health Commissioner

James S. Burkhardt, DO  
Medical Director



Miami County Public Health  
510 West Water Street Suite 130  
Troy, Ohio 45373-2985  
P: 937-573-3500  
F: 937-573-3501

[info@miamicountyhealth.net](mailto:info@miamicountyhealth.net)  
[www.miamicountyhealth.net](http://www.miamicountyhealth.net)





Fentanyl test strips have been shown to facilitate behavior change to protect against overdose. According to a 2018 John Hopkins Study of active drug users, 70% of respondents reported that knowing that their drugs contained fentanyl would lead them to modify their behavior.<sup>iii</sup> Another study, conducted out of North Carolina, concluded that individuals with a positive fentanyl test strip test result were five times more likely to report changes in drug use behavior compared to those with a negative result.<sup>iv</sup>

Under current law, paraphernalia is defined to include items used to test drugs, including fentanyl test strips. This leaves many Ohio communities and organizations fearful of potential criminal and civil penalties for distributing these life-saving tools. Senate Bill 296 would align Ohio with other states such as Arizona, which updated its state law in 2021 to remove fentanyl test strips from the definition of drug paraphernalia.

Along with the legalization of fentanyl test strips, Senate Bill 296 would also remove barriers to the distribution and administration of naloxone. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that can reverse an opioid overdose, including those involving fentanyl. This bill exempts naloxone from most Board of Pharmacy distribution laws and broadens access to naloxone to all Ohioans.

Senate Bill 296 will be beneficial to both Miami County Public Health and the residents we serve through the new syringe exchange program being implemented. Legalizing fentanyl test strips will ensure we can use funding to buy these strips with no backlash. Fentanyl test strips are an important resource for those who use drugs to help prevent deadly overdoses. Senate Bill 296 will also

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allow any resident of the county to possess naloxone which can be used to reverse a potentially deadly overdose.

On behalf of Miami County Public Health, we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Denis R. Propes, REHS, MPA

Health Commissioner

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The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of BirdieLight, a fentanyl education initiative, to express my support for Senate Bill 296, which would legalize the use of narcotic testing products, including fentanyl test strips, and deregulate naloxone. If passed, this legislation would be a significant step forward for local communities and organizations working to prevent fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the state.

Making it possible for individuals to check their drugs for the presence of fentanyl using fentanyl test strips is vital due to Ohio's increasingly lethal drug supply. For example, illicit fentanyl was involved in 81% of Ohio's 2020 overdose deaths, often in combination with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.<sup>i[i]</sup> Additionally, counterfeit prescription tablets containing fentanyl are being sold on the streets that are nearly impossible to detect with the naked eye.<sup>ii[iii]</sup> Fentanyl test strips are easy to use, cost one dollar per strip, and are 96-100% accurate in detecting the presence of fentanyl.

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**The decriminalization of fentanyl test strips would allow my organization, BirdieLight, to apply for grant awards, and in particular would allow us to provide fentanyl test strips to young people who want to ensure a safe drug supply. While we educate always that drug avoidance is the safest route, we realize that young people also need the ability to test any substance for deadly fentanyl.**

On behalf of **BirdieLight** we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

*Jenny Burley BSN, RN, LSN*

Beth Weinstock MD

Founder and CEO of BirdieLight

Birdielight.org

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<sup>vii</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

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On behalf of **BirdieLight** we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Carlin T. Gilroy

Social Work Intern at Equitas Health

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

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*No longer alone. No longer silent. No longer ashamed.*

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman  
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Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 296

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

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*No longer alone. No longer silent. No longer ashamed.*

There has been many of our children's lives saved by Naloxone, my son being one of them, and many of our children lost due to not having access to Narcan and the use of fentanyl test strips. This bill could help save many lives. Please know that our group of parents with the children with the disease of addiction and our group of parents that have lost a child SUPPORT and feel that this bill CAN have an impact to help keep our some of our children alive.

On behalf of **The Addict's Parents United (TAP United)** we strongly support the passage of SB 296. This legislation expands access to important interventions necessary to respond to the dangerous rise of fentanyl in our state and will save lives.

Sincerely,

Brenda Stewart

The Addict's Parents United – TAP United

Founder

[www.tapunited.org](http://www.tapunited.org)

[brenda@markbrenda.com](mailto:brenda@markbrenda.com)

(614) 206-8129

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<sup>i</sup> Ohio Department of Health, 2020 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings. <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/media/2020+ohio+drug+overdose+report>

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