

**SB 288**

**Proponent Testimony**

**Abby Spears**

**Chair**

**Scioto Connect**

**02/28/22**

Dear Chairman Manning, Vice-Chair McColley, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer proponent testimony for the Good Samaritan provisions of SB 288, as well as offering these 3 additional amendments:

- 1. Remove restrictions for those on parole and probation (community control or post release-control).**
- 2. Remove limitations on how many times an individual can receive the immunity.**
- 3. Remove treatment assessment requirements.**

My name is Abby Spears, I am lifelong resident of Scioto County and currently reside in Portsmouth, Ohio, the city that was once known as the “Pill Mill Capitol of the US.” In 1995 I was a freshman in high school and was first introduced to the opioid pain medications that would insidiously work their way through an entire generation of young people in Southern Ohio. In four short years, the day after I graduated high school, I learned of what would be the first friend that I lost to overdose. Since that time, my list has grown, and is heavy with the loss of so many. Almost an entire generation in my community has been lost.

Since those early experiences, I have spent my adult life working in my community with many of the most vulnerable. From public safety to education and now public health and harm reduction, I have continued to personally experience and witness the mass devastation that is the overdose crisis. Working in public health and harm reduction means that I have regularly participated in Overdose Fatality Reviews, community outreach, and direct service through our local syringe service program. I hear about the fear associated with potential arrest and traumatic experiences with law enforcement. With the OFR we see numerous cases of individuals who would be alive today if the Good Samaritan law was more expansive and truly offered broad protection to those most at risk of fentanyl poisoning.

The past two years, Scioto County has led Ohio in fatal overdoses per capita. Last year recording the highest per capita rate in the states history. These are friends, family members, and neighbors. Expanding the Good Samaritan law through the inclusion of the aforementioned amendments means that more of Scioto Countians and more Ohioans live to build a life.

**Commented [1]:** Please note this was previously addressed to the wrong committee. Apologies. Please be sure your testimony is addressed in this way.

**Commented [2]:** See below

I thank you again for your time and consideration and please, reach out with any additional questions or needs.

Sincerely,

Abby Spears  
Chair  
Scioto Connect  
[abby@sciotoconnect.org](mailto:abby@sciotoconnect.org)  
(740) 357 – 9773