



**Proponent Testimony submitted to the Ohio Senate Primary & Secondary Education Committee  
House Bill 105**

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Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence  
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Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Fedor, and Members of the Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 105. The Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence (OAESV) is Ohio's statewide anti-sexual violence coalition. We advocate for comprehensive responses and rape crisis services and we empower communities to prevent sexual violence.

That is why I am writing in support of Erin's Law today – to continue to build capacity for our state to prevent sexual violence from occurring in the first place. The stark reality is that thousands of Ohio children are sexually abused each year. More than 22,000 children were listed as victims in Ohio law enforcement reports on sexual violence between 2017 and 2021<sup>1</sup>. Of those, more than 12,000 victims were 12 or younger<sup>2</sup>. Many more cases of child sexual abuse are never reported. We know that over two-thirds of survivors never report their abuse for any number of reasons – the fear of not being believed, the lack of education to know that the sexual abuse was wrong until later in life, the absence of supportive, trusting adults; the list goes on. As the state coalition for Ohio, we hear from countless adult survivors of child sexual abuse a similar refrain: that if they had been taught about personal safety and seeking help, it would have helped stop the abuse much sooner – or if they had an adult who could have connected them to supportive resources, they would have been able to begin recovery sooner.

Erin's Law would provide a much-needed standard across our 88 counties for public school children to have the opportunity to learn about developmentally-appropriate topics that build the foundation for sexual abuse prevention and healthy, safe relationships in all areas of their lives.

All of our schools deserve to have these tools and programming. All of our students deserve protection from child sexual abuse. And all students who have experienced sexual abuse deserve to have supportive resources and a compassionate response from prepared school staff.

House Bill 105 must be passed. OAESV strongly encourages the passage of House Bill 105 to protect Ohio's children. Thank you again for the opportunity to submit testimony. I am available to answer questions by email at [egemar@oesv.org](mailto:egemar@oesv.org).

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<sup>1,2</sup> Laird, J., DeMio, T., Bruner, B. (2022, November 17). Child sexual assault and abuse: They're more common than Ohioans may think. The Columbus Dispatch. <https://www.dispatch.com/>