



THE CENTER FOR COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

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House Behavioral Health Committee

Written Proponent Testimony on House Concurrent Resolution 16

Chairwoman Pavliga, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Brewer, and Members of the House Behavioral Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony on House Concurrent Resolution 16. The Center for Community Solutions is a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank that aims to improve health, social and economic conditions through research, policy analysis, and communication.

The Center for Community Solutions is engaged across infant and maternal health issues in Ohio. However, there has been a rising concern that maternal mental health is affecting birthing parents and their children. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) listed mental health conditions (including deaths to suicide and overdose/poisoning due to a substance use disorder) as the leading cause of pregnancy-related deaths in the United States at 23 percent. Likewise, the Ohio Department of Health published a report last year stating that half of all pregnancy-related deaths in the state were due to mental health conditions and injuries. According to the March of Dimes, babies who are born to depressed birthing parents are more likely to have low birth weight, longer stays in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) and an increased risk of suffering from health issues.

As maternal mental health is negatively impacting families, we support the passing of House Concurrent Resolution 16. House Concurrent Resolution 16 will encourage programs to continue to address maternal mental health conditions for families. Moreover, House Concurrent Resolution 16 will spread awareness of maternal mental health conditions to Ohioans so they can learn how to prevent and handle this crisis. Ultimately, this resolution will contribute to policymakers' goal to have Ohio become the best place in the country to have a baby and raise families.

We want to thank you again for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony on House Concurrent Resolution 16 and appreciate the sponsors bringing attention to this important topic. We would welcome the chance to share additional research that the Center for Community Solutions has conducted in this space.

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For further information on data referenced in this testimony, please see the links below:

Four in 5 pregnancy-related deaths in the U.S. are preventable (CDC Press Release):

<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2022/p0919-pregnancy-related-deaths.html>

Take Care of Your Mental Health During Pregnancy (March of Dimes):

<https://www.marchofdimes.org/find-support/blog/take-care-your-mental-health-during-pregnancy>

A Report on Pregnancy-Related Deaths in Ohio 2017-2018 (Ohio Department of Health):

https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/wcm/connect/gov/960f9320-f4bc-4752-b6cb-990be663a31a/A+Report+on+Pregnancy-Related+Deaths+in+Ohio+2017-2018.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CONVERT_TO=url&CACHEID=ROOTWORKSPACE.Z18_M1HGGIKON0JO00QO9DDDM3000-960f9320-f4bc-4752-b6cb-990be663a31a-oG4C2Up