

OH HJR 1 Opponent Testimony
House Constitutional Resolutions Committee

Taseen Alam, Medical Student

Dear Chair Phil Plummer, Vice Chair Brett Hillyer, Ranking Member Ismail Mohamed, and Members of the House Constitutional Resolutions Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Taseen Alam. I am a first-year medical student at the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine **testifying in strong opposition to House Joint Resolution 1, the Constitutional Amendment to Require a 60% vote to approve any constitutional amendment.** My testimony is strictly my own and does not represent any entity or organization in the State of Ohio.

I speak as a future medical provider in the state of Ohio. I started my journey as a medical student this past July by writing an oath with my classmates. This oath is built upon the following ethical principles: beneficence, non-maleficence, autonomy, and justice. As a future physician, I vowed to uphold these ethical principles for all of my patients inside and outside the clinic. What I see with this constitutional amendment is a threat to autonomy and justice for my future patients and our community.

There have been countless times in the clinic where I have seen patients unable to afford their cancer treatment and patients fail to see a specialist for their declining vision because insurance doesn't cover it. While they may see the doctor to heal their illness, their fate was sealed at the hands of corrupt politicians. Thus, the only way we can advocate for our patients and serve them outside the clinic is at the ballot box.

When we practice, the number one thing we are told is that as long as the patient is mentally sound, only they can make decisions for themselves. The people of Ohio are not only mentally sound, but passionate and have clearly demonstrated their ability to take matters into their own hands. As physicians, it goes against the oath we solemnly swore in July to take away their voice, their *autonomy*. Why, then, is their freedom of choice under threat to be taken away by the paternalistic hand of those seated in this room? I urge you all to remember the oath you swore when you took office to uphold the values of the American Constitution: to protect the rights of your constituents, their rights to free speech, and their right to vote. I urge you to uphold your oath by voting against this resolution. I thank you for your time, I now yield the remainder of my time to questions.