

**Committees:**

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Finance Subcommittee on  
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**Representative Mike Loychik  
The Ohio House of Representatives**

**HB 434 Sponsor Testimony: Finance Committee – May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

Chairman Edwards, Vice Chair LaRe, Ranking Member Sweeney, and my fellow members of the Ohio House Finance Committee; thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 434 to you today.

HB 434, along with its companion in the Senate, would establish the Traumatic Brain Injury Treatment Accelerator Pilot Program to support research and improve treatments.

Traumatic brain injuries range from mild concussions to life-threatening brain bleeds and blood clots. The Ohio Department of Health has found that one in four Ohioans have experienced at least one traumatic brain injury in their lifetime; nearly 2 million people. Research suggests these injuries are the leading cause of death and disability in persons under the age of 45. In terms of financial impact, in 2017, Ohioans lost \$6 billion in medical expenses and missed wages from traumatic brain injury. Current treatment is lengthy, pricey, and symptoms are difficult to manage.

The Wall Street Journal recently discussed the impact modern warfare has had on the brain. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs hosted Ukrainian doctors for trauma training, where psychological fallout from traumatic brain injuries were a major concern. Improvements in medical care and solid armor have helped keep more people alive during these conflicts, but the mental toll also needs to be considered.

“From 2000 to 2022—a period including engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq—about 459,000 U.S. service members were diagnosed with a TBI during training or in combat, according to an Inspector General evaluation of the Defense Department. The report, published last March, found a lack of consistency in implementing policies and procedures to determine the care needed for those who suffer.”

HB 434 would appropriate \$10 million from the General Revenue Fund to provide for the Accelerator Pilot Program. The Brain Injury Research Foundation will be given the responsibility of allocating this appropriation to research entities in the form of grants. The Ohio State University, the University of Toledo, the University of Cincinnati, and InfinixBio would lead this effort.

This legislation will also provide an investment into pharmaceutical treatments for these injuries. It is expected that for every dollar spent on the research of these drugs, Ohioans could see an economic benefit of four to nine dollars through shorter hospital stays, reduced medical costs, and increased productivity.

This legislation will also help establish our state as a “biohub” of neuro-innovation at the forefront of this crisis. New discoveries will be made; spin-off industries, patents, and intellectual property will be developed right here. Both Ohio's leadership and compassion in this field can be on full display, and HB 434 is just the beginning.

Thank you again for your time today. I am happy to take any questions you may have.

**Figure 1: Collaborative Partnership Flowchart between Industry (InfinixBio), Nonprofit (The Brain Injury Research Foundation), and leading TBI Research Universities in Ohio**

