

Dear Chairman Cutrona, Vice Chair Gross, Ranking Member Somani, and members of the Health Provider Services Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to provide written support testimony for HB 73; the Dave and Angie Patient and Health Provider Protection Act. I am outraged that we are at this situation in Ohio. I am asking you to support a bill to give doctors back autonomy over individual care and prevent the senseless deaths of my fellow Ohioans. This seems insane, but it is an unfortunate reality we are currently living in. Medical professionals are being dictated, threatened, and coerced to follow one narrative instead of what they know is best for individual patients. We are losing Ohioans because some patients are put last and financial incentives are put first. If you do not believe or know this is happening, then you are not living in the present. This should be a concern of all representatives despite what party line you are affiliated with.

My husband co-founded a nonprofit organization called "Ohio Stands Up" to assist individuals that were not properly cared for over the last three years and to stand up against situations presented in this bill. Later, it was very disheartening to learn that most of our representatives in our state were not part of that standing up. I hope moving forward all of you get on board.

"Ohio Stands Up!", received calls nonstop during the height of COVID asking for legal assistance to get their loved one's proper care. Doctors were given one set of protocols which was remdesivir and venting at the time and many were left to die as loved ones worked with angst to get into facilities. Ohioans quickly started learning this was a death sentence. In fact, calls came into the nonprofit looking for legal help because their loved ones died from the actual response and not Covid. Many Ohioans chose to stay away from hospitals altogether and even got medication out of the country. Others were looking for assistance to get their loved ones out of the hospital or wanted the hospital to switch protocol since doctors were not allowed to go against the assigned protocol. Some patients were admitted to hospital for reasons other than Covid and were threatened with a vent and remdesivir anyway. Others were trying to get their loved one moved. "Ohio Stands Up!" connected with doctors that were being ridiculed for trying to save their patients. It was a disaster and countless victims were a result. Ohio does not want a repeat and this needs to end!

There were many other methods being successfully implemented like hydroxychloroquine, ivermectin and vitamin C- to name a few-in alternative settings. I personally am immune compromised and worked with an integrative doctor to obtain ivermectin to calm the cytokine storm. It was successful for me just like countless others. I was also taking a prophylactic protocol that would never be prescribed by any doctor working for a big system. I refused to call my current doctors for assistance, because I knew if I were to be hospitalized, there was a good chance I was not coming out. I knew their hands would be tied. I could not go and obtain any real help from my PCP or any specialist that cares for me. This was not only disheartening, but daunting.

I could go on and on with examples. I am asking you to support HB 73. Please help protect individualized medicine, medical integrity, and the lives of Ohioans. The reality is, many Ohioans do not trust the system anymore. We need to know doctors can practice without retaliation and patients will not be mistreated by their choices.

Sincerely,

Renee Hedges