



HOUSE HEALTH PROVIDER SERVICES COMMITTEE – Proponent Testimony, House Bill 136, 10.17.23

Chairman Cutrona, Vice Chair Gross, Ranking Member Somani, and members of the committee, thank you for holding this hearing and for the opportunity to provide testimony. My name is Jeff Dillon, and I am the Ohio Legislative Director for Americans for Prosperity (AFP). As one of the largest grassroots organizations in the country, AFP is driving long-term solutions to some of the country's biggest problems. Our organization, and its thousands of activists across Ohio are dedicated to breaking barriers that stand in the way of people realizing their full potential. Removing these barriers, in whatever forms they take, helps move our society toward one of mutual benefit, where people succeed by helping others improve their lives and by transforming their communities. Accordingly, I would urge this committee to support and pass House Bill 136, sponsored by Reps. Holmes and Stewart, which would authorize the operation of remote dispensing pharmacies.

AFP supports HB 136 because it will reduce barriers to accessing affordable pharmaceutical care for rural Ohioans who do not have the same amount of consumer options available to them as many Ohioans who live in suburban and urban areas do. Taking innovative steps within the healthcare system to ensure that the needs of underserved populations are being met is critically important.

HB 136 builds upon the good work done by the 134th General Assembly's passage of HB 122, also sponsored by Rep. Holmes, also supported by AFP, which permanently expanded the utilization of telehealth in Ohio to better serve patients. As Rep. Holmes noted in his sponsor testimony, pharmacists and remote dispensing pharmacies were intentionally excluded from that legislation because he believed it deserved to be addressed in standalone legislation. Other types of healthcare providers across the system have demonstrated that telehealth can work smoothly and safely for patients and providers alike. Enabling pharmacy technicians and interns to operate remotely under the tele-supervision – if you will – of a pharmacist will allow for new distribution outlets that otherwise may simply not be cost-effective to operate in remote portions of the state.

In addition to the tele-supervision at the heart of the bill's intent, HB 136 also will ensure safe and orderly operations at remote dispensing pharmacies by requiring that rules be adopted from everything to constant video surveillance to rigorous background checks and more, all outlined in a detailed manner in the Legislative Service Commission's bill analysis.

The previous version of HB 136, HB 645 of the 134th General Assembly, passed the Ohio House by a vote of 90 to 2 last session. AFP – Ohio would like to urge this committee to bring this legislation to the House floor in the near future and continue to move it through the legislative process so that new doors for innovative, efficient, safe, and affordable healthcare delivery are available to all communities in Ohio, irrespective of geography or demographics.

Thank you to Representatives Holmes and Stewart for their leadership on this issue, and thank you again, Chairman, for the opportunity to testify today. I will do my best to answer any questions that you or members of the committee may have.

Americans for Prosperity (AFP) exists to recruit, educate, and mobilize citizens in support of the policies and goals of a free society at the local, state, and federal level, helping every American live their dream – especially the least fortunate. AFP has more than 3.2 million activists across the nation, a local infrastructure that includes 36 state chapters, and has received financial support from more than 100,000 Americans in all 50 states. For more information, visit www.AmericansForProsperity.org.