



## Ohio Life Sciences

Chair Lampton, Vice Chair Barhorst, Ranking Member Miranda, and Members of the House Insurance Committee, thank you for this opportunity to present proponent testimony on House Bill 24, which would require health plan and Medicaid coverage of biomarker testing.

My name is Willa Bluestone and I am the Director of Policy and Workforce Strategies at Ohio Life Sciences. We are the trade association for the entire bioscience industry within the State of Ohio. Our members include pharmaceutical companies, gene and cell therapy researchers, medical tech and medical device manufacturers, just to name a few. Our members are on the absolute cutting edge of bioscience advancements that allow Ohioans to live happier and healthier lives.

You have heard from a number of doctors, patients, and advocates today, so my hope is to offer you a slightly different perspective, one of medical innovation and cost savings.

HB24 will not only save Ohioan's lives by creating a pathway for targeted, precision treatment, but this undoubtedly leads to reduced costs for patients and the health care system as a whole.

CVS Health researchers [released an analysis](#) on the cost difference between offering cancer patients broad-panel and narrow-panel sequencing. The broad-panel screenings look at a wider range of genetic variations and overall provide a better idea of the tumor's makeup. The study found that broad-panel screenings cost around \$2,000 whereas narrow-panel screenings cost just over \$900. You have an upfront cost increase of about \$1,100 for the more advanced test.

However, on average, the six-month per member per month costs for those who underwent broad-panel sequencing was \$11,535 compared to \$20,039 for those who were given the narrow-panel screening.

**This creates a saving of \$8,504 per member per month.** Subtracting the *one-time* \$1,100 price increase for the more expansive test over this 6-month period leaves you with an average cost savings of \$8,321 per month.

H.B. 24 will also help Ohio's economy and support medical innovation. Ohio is quickly becoming a hub for bioscience. Driven in part by the fact our state hosts 15 percent of the country's active clinical trials, ranking 7th among all states and 1st in the Midwest.

In 2022, there were more than 5,400 clinical trials underway or recruiting in Ohio. Clinical trials play a critical role in getting more innovative treatments to market, and biomarkers can provide researchers with evidence about the safety and efficacy of such treatments while more data is collected.

Ohio can send a message that it supports life science innovation by enacting HB 24. We will join states like Arizona, California, Illinois, and Louisiana, which have already moved forward to support biomarkers.

We are tied for fourth among states in the number of gene therapy startups and companies. However, those businesses do not flourish without the right ecosystem around them, and legislation like H.B. 24 is a crucial part of that.

Our bioscience industry is strong and growing, as many of you already know. The biosciences employ some 83,000 Ohioans at companies ranging from the large and well-known to startups with only 1 employee. That employment has increased 15 percent in the last five years, with an average wage of \$84,600. That salary is more than \$30,000 higher than the average wage across all industries. All told, Ohio's bioscience industries generated \$7.1 billion in payroll in 2019, the most recent year for which we have figures available. That is a 21 percent increase over five years.

In general, the biosciences are a sound, smart economic investment for Ohio. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic that disrupted business across our state, Ohio bioscience companies continued to provide jobs and spend on capital improvements. From 2020-2022, those companies have invested \$1.6 billion in new facilities and expansions that are projected to create more than 6,400 new jobs.

Again, let's foster this growth, support medical innovation, save our state and patients money by passing this bill. Ohio Life Sciences is proud to stand in support of this bill.

Chairman Lampton and Members of the House Insurance Committee, thank you for your time. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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