

November 18, 2024

Chairperson Matthews, Vice Chair Stewart, Ranking Member Liston and members of the Public Health Policy Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Rebecca Belford. I strongly support House Bill 89 (“Regards intimate examination of anesthetized, unconscious patient”).

I am not a medical expert and have no experience with medical education. I write this simply as an Ohio woman who uses the health care system. I was horrified to learn about the prevalence of the practice of unconsented intimate exams. Now, on top of worrying about medical outcomes and complications, I am also deeply concerned that a medical procedure could include what—if conscious—would be assault. I have personally delayed recommended procedures because I am so concerned about being subjected to an unnecessary and invasive pelvic exam without my consent or knowledge.

This bill is critically important to protect patients and also to prevent medical students from being put in an impossible position of choosing between the vital principle of consent and patient respect and a request from their instructor to the contrary.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote YES on this important bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.