

Proponent Testimony

Substitute House Bill 33

Senate Medicaid Committee

May 25, 2023

Chair Dolan, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking member Sykes, and members of the Ohio Senate Finance Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to present written testimony on Substitute House Bill 33, the state's operating appropriations for fiscal years 2024-2025.

My name is Dr. Mark Bronson, I am a practicing dentist in Cincinnati, Ohio. I am also the First Vice President of the American Dental Association and a past president of the Ohio Dental Association.

After graduation from the Ohio State College of Dentistry in 1991, I went to work in my father's dental practice. My father, Dr. Fred Bronson, and I worked together until his retirement in 2019. Our practice has been in the same Cincinnati location since 1973.

I have for many years provided oral health care for my patients, including those that are covered by Ohio dental Medicaid, and the current increase in the budget for dental Medicaid will provide much needed relief for providers like myself.

My current situation is that because of the extremely low reimbursement rates, increasing business costs, and administrative matters, I am at the point where I may not be able to continue seeing patients covered by Ohio dental Medicaid. As one of the longest continuously operating African American-owned and operated dental offices in the Cincinnati area, I do not want to close my doors to the Medicaid patients in my community. However, without substantial increases in dental Medicaid funding, I will have no choice since the current levels of reimbursement do not even cover my overhead costs related to providing the care.

My dental team consists of one full-time and one part-time dental hygiene practitioner, two clinical dental assistants and two administrative team members. We work 4 to 5 days a week offering services like exams, x-rays, prophylaxis (cleanings), restorations (fillings), extractions, root canals, removable partial dentures, and full dentures. I treat children from the age of 1 up to adults and senior citizens. My practice gets referrals from the University of Cincinnati Hospital oral surgery department, many Cincinnati Health department dental clinics, and many other health facilities, due to the variety of services we offer.

In my capacity as the ADA Vice President, I have chaired the ADA Task Force on Medicaid Reform for the past two years. We are studying problems with the Medicaid system in all 50 states. I believe it was brought to your attention by Mr. David Owsiany at the Ohio Dental Association that Ohio Dental Medicaid offers coverage for comprehensive dental treatment, which is a plus, but ranks 44th out of 50 states in

reimbursements, which is very problematic. Many states are increasing reimbursement that will allow small business dental practices to be able to at least meet their costs of doing business and providing care. Asking small business to accept 40 cents on the dollar, as is the current situation in Ohio, has become impossible.

I urge you to analyze the state budget and keep the current increase for dental Medicaid that is contained in the substitute budget bill which funds reimbursement rates for Ohio dental Medicaid at 65% of private dental insurance reimbursement. My community of Hamilton County and our entire state needs this.

Thank you for allowing me to present this written testimony. If you have any questions please contact me.

Thank you,

Yours in Oral Health,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark E. Bronson DDS." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mark E. Bronson DDS