



To: Members of the Ohio Senate Health Committee

Fr: Joe Rosato, Director, Government Relations, Ohio State Medical Association

Da: November 15, 2023

Re: SB 144

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On behalf of the Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA), the state's oldest and largest professional organization representing Ohio physicians, medical residents, and medical students, I thank Chair Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio, and the members of the Senate Health Committee for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding our concerns about Senate Bill 144.

OSMA is a strong advocate for access to immunizations, and we are not opposed to trained pharmacy technicians administering vaccinations to children in the same manner as pharmacists. We are troubled; however, by the provisions of SB 144 allowing for these immunizations to occur in pharmacies without a prescription, due to how this would impact well child visit rates across the state.

It is important that in our efforts to support the health and well-being of children in our state, we do not dissuade adherence to their primary care visits. Annual well child visits are critical to monitoring the health of Ohio's youth, providing important opportunities to for developmental assessments and behavioral health screenings, and communicating about growth milestones to their parents and guardians. It is not uncommon for childhood immunization needs to serve as one of the primary motivators for scheduling and attending annual primary care well child visits. Consequently, OSMA believes that if their immunizations can be administered in pharmacies without a prescription, fewer children will attend these annual well child visits. In order to comprehensively support the health of Ohio's children, vaccine access must not come at the expense of many children not seeing their primary care physicians yearly.

Thank you for your consideration of our remarks. As always, we appreciate the opportunity to be a meaningful contributor to the legislative process, and please feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter further.