

June 6, 2024

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide my personal opponent testimony on House Bill 73.

My name is Matthew J. Majzun D.O., and I am a board-certified pulmonary and critical care physician from Columbus, Ohio. For the past 17 years, I have cared for patients in our great State both in hospitals and in outpatient settings. As a medical staff leader focused on healthcare quality and patient safety with years of experience specifically in medication safety, I am writing to provide testimony in opposition to House Bill 73. As a life-long resident of Ohio, I take great pride in having been trained here and having given care to patients from across our great State. As a physician, I have a professional responsibility to the safety and well-being of my patients and to the general welfare of our community, which is why I feel the need to provide testimony against this bill.

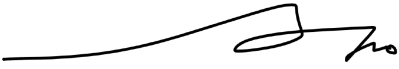
While all physicians must use valid scientific evidence as well as their experience to care for the patients before them, and that may occasionally mean using a medication in an off-label fashion, the current framework within this bill would provide significant potential unsafe situations for our patients. The evolution of modern healthcare in our state has provided us with complex, high-performing, team-based care for Ohio citizens that is world-class, and House Bill 73 has many provisions that could compromise that care. House Bill 73 would require pharmacists to potentially dispense a drug, provided by a patient or family member without any way of verifying the identity of that drug. This bypasses many of the standard safeguards that are in place to protect patients from accidental harm related to prescription medications. It would also allow a provider who does not understand the current condition of a patient or their current treatment plan to prescribe medication that may dangerously interact with other medications or underlying health conditions.

In addition to the challenges this bill provides to our pharmacist colleagues, House Bill 73 also allows for the circumvention of a hospital medical staff's processes for ensuring that a provider is qualified and safe to provide care to their community's patients. As you likely know, the ultimate responsibility of ensuring quality and patient safety within our hospitals is delegated to the medical staffs by their boards of directors. In every hospital in Ohio this is governed by medical staff by-laws that allow for proper, deliberate vetting of a potential provider's training, background, skillset, and ethical standards. House Bill 73 removes those safety measures and undermines these responsibilities and legal requirements of Ohio hospitals and medical staffs under Title 37 of the Ohio Revised Code.

House Bill 73 also provides a potential scenario for unscrupulous providers to offer false hope to already suffering patients and families, by offering medications that have no or very limited scientific evidence of effectiveness and an unknown safety profile. Ohio patients and families who are in extremis should receive the care of an integrated, compassionate, and ethically motivated care team at one of our state's expert hospitals or hospice facilities. They should not be preyed upon by unethical providers looking to turn a profit off fear and grief.

While there are several other potential issues with the bill that would make it confusing and onerous to Ohio providers to prescribe off-label in more routine instances, where there is often stronger scientific data and clinical experience, the concerns I've raised above provide more than enough reason for me to provide testimony against this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony in opposition to House Bill 73 and for your time considering the threat that it poses to Ohio patients.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Majzun', with a long horizontal line extending to the left.

Matthew J. Majzun D.O.