

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 Emily Loudermilk, and I am an inpatient clinical and operations pharmacist. Within the hospital setting, I review medication orders to ensure they are safe and effective, provide recommendations to help optimize medication therapy, and help improve patient outcomes to help Ohio citizens to stay healthy and out of the hospital. I am writing to express some of my concerns with House Bill 73, which will harm the Ohio patients whom I care for. While there are multiple concerns I have with House Bill 73, I would like to focus on two main areas in my testimony: 1) House Bill 73 does not expand off-label medication access and 2) House Bill 73 directly contradicts current pharmacy law.

I would like to emphasize that I have no opposition to off-label medication use, because clinically appropriate off-label prescribing where benefits of therapy outweigh the associated risks already occurs with an extremely high frequency. I regularly engage in off-label medication use in my practice. House Bill 73 does not expand access to off label prescribing because it is already a widely utilized practice, what House Bill 73 does is remove patient protections by requiring us pharmacists to dispense any prescription for an off-label use of a medication that we receive, even when it would harm our patient. Patients have a very real need to access the medications which will be of benefit to them, including medications being used off-label but as a pharmacist, I have a duty to ensure that the medication I am dispensing them is safe to use and will not harm them. House Bill 73 would require me to dispense a medication known increase seizure risk to a patient with a seizure disorder. I would be required to dispense an antibiotic that would not treat the infection the patient has. Many medications used in children and pregnant women are utilized off-label, so House Bill 73 would remove my ability to protect these high-risk populations from harm due to inappropriate medication prescribing. Proponents of House Bill 73 believe that this bill will expand access to medications, however what House Bill 73 is actually going to do is put pharmacists in the position where they will have to choose between upholding the law and keeping patients safe. In removing a pharmacist's ability to refuse to dispense inappropriately prescribed off-label medications on the basis of scientific evidence, House Bill 73 removes the last line of defense for patients and will ultimately cause patient harm.

House Bill 73 directly contradicts existing pharmacy law which establishes the legal standard for pharmacy practice. Pharmacists are required to ensure proper prescribing and ensure prescriptions are written for a legitimate medical purpose based on OAC Rule 4729:5-5-15. Pharmacists are also required to perform a drug utilization review, where we clinically and scientifically review the patient and the prescription to ensure

it is safe and effective. House Bill 73 would require pharmacists to dispense medications regardless of whether or not there is a legitimate medical purpose and would eliminate a pharmacist's ability to intervene to address issues found during our drug utilization review. When entering the pharmacy profession, I took a professional oath to do no harm. House Bill 73 would require me to abandon the oath of my profession and currently existing pharmacy practice standards outlined in Ohio law.

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.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Emily Loudermilk', with a stylized, flowing script.

Emily Loudermilk, PharmD, MS Pharmacogenomics, BCPS