

To: Members of the Ohio Senate Health Committee

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

Da: November 13, 2024

Re: SB 255

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, we write today in support of Senate Bill 255. This legislation makes several changes to current law regarding coroners, death reporting, and autopsies.

Specifically, our organization is in strong support of the following provisions contained in SB 255:

- A requirement that all coroners must be either a medical doctor or doctor of osteopathic medicine. Notably, a key component of the coroner's role is the ability to sign death certificates, and this provision ensures that the coroner can carry out this integral part of their job.
- A requirement that collaboration agreements between collaborating physicians and advanced practice registered nurses and supervision agreements between supervising physicians and physician assistants must include an agreement that the physician must be the one to sign and complete the medical certificate of death.
- A specification that autopsy costs include any component of conducting an autopsy, as well as costs to transport the body, and establishes a \$350 per hour fee for a coroner for time spent preparing for and giving expert testimony at a trial, hearing or deposition in a civil action. Further, SB 255 specifies that the coroner may bill back to the county where the injury causing death occurred, other than the county in which the autopsy was performed.

We believe these changes represent issues within current law that require appropriate updates in order to reasonably reflect current practices and the changing landscape of the work performed by our state's elected physician coroners and the death reporting system in Ohio.

Thank you for your consideration of our remarks. As always, we appreciate the opportunity to be meaningful contributors to the legislative process. Please contact us should you have any questions.