

Dear Senate Health Committee,

Hello, my name is Nick Newman, and I'm a resident of Ohio Senate District 23. I am writing to ask that you oppose House Bill 73 and its ideas. As a pharmacist, the implications of this proposed bill are deeply personal to me, as I believe it will lead to harm for Ohioans if enacted.

While proponents of House Bill 73 state it will improve healthcare of Ohioans by guaranteeing access to off-label prescribing, the language of the bill effectively removes requirements to ensure safe prescribing for patients. Off-label prescribing is already a common practice, but each individual patient may have specific factors to consider such as drug interactions, history of other health conditions, drug allergies, and lab result monitoring in order to provide the most effective and safe care. Even if a pharmacist objects to a prescription due to concern for causing harm to a patient, House Bill 73 would require them to dispense the medication. House Bill 73 removes requirements for pharmacist review as part of the safe prescribing process, and puts them in a position where breaking the law would be required if they believe the prescription is going to cause patient harm.

Furthermore, House Bill 73 also will allow a provision for any prescriber to prescribe any medication, to any patient, at any hospital across the state. This provision, requiring urgent hospital credentialing of non-affiliated prescribers, is only enacted if there are no prescribers on that patient's care team that recommend this medication. The multidisciplinary treatment team at a hospital, deeply vested in the care of the patient, carefully considers risks and benefits of a treatment in a holistic manner. They also already often seek advice from non-hospital prescribers familiar with the patient's needs, such as the patient's primary care provider. Requirement to provide treatments from any lone-wolf prescriber opens the door for "Snake Oil Salesmen" to take advantage of vulnerable patients with potentially harmful consequences.

Sincerely,

Nick Newman, PharmD
Board Certified Infectious Diseases Pharmacist