

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

My name is Brittany Hawley, and I am a 6th year pharmacy student from Ohio Northern University. I am writing to express my concern that House Bill 73 will harm the Ohio patients whom I care for.

I want to start with that I have no opposition to the clinically appropriate use of off-label medications, as such prescribing occurs frequently in medical practice. I have seen various incidents of off-label prescribing when it is warranted by patient need throughout my pharmacy school career. However, House Bill 73 does not expand access to off-label medications. Instead, it simply eliminates crucial patient protections by mandating that pharmacists dispense any off-label prescription, even if doing so would harm the patient.

The sponsors of House Bill 73 claim it preserves access to potentially beneficial treatments, but these medications are already accessible through responsible off-label prescribing. What this bill actually does is strip away the protections that safeguard patients from unsafe, irresponsible prescribing practices. By preventing pharmacists from refusing to dispense medications based on scientific evidence and professional judgment, House Bill 73 removes the last line of defense for patient safety, ultimately leading to harm.

House Bill 73 will directly oppose existing pharmacy practice law which establishes the legal standard for pharmacy practice. For example, per OAC Rule 4729:5-5-15, pharmacists have a corresponding responsibility to ensure proper prescribing and must ensure that all prescriptions are issued for a legitimate medical purpose. Imagine for a moment that your child or elderly parent is in the hospital and a physician who has never seen or examined your loved one but has just simply read over your loved one case and remembers reading that a medication could be used off-label to treat whatever condition your loved one has. The physician puts the order in for the off-label medication for your loved one and I, as a future pharmacist, have to verify this order even though it might be unsafe for your loved one due to age, lab values, or preexisting conditions.

Imagine spending countless hours studying to become an expert in medications—acquiring in-depth knowledge about different drugs, their potential side effects, and the risks of using them improperly, only for that to be stripped away from you. As pharmacists, we take great pride in our role as protectors of patient safety, working diligently to ensure that the medications we dispense are safe and appropriate for each individual patient. House Bill 73 would undermine the expertise pharmacists have developed over years of training by making it impossible for us to question the legitimacy of a prescription. It would strip away our ability to apply our knowledge of medications and their risks, forcing us to verify and dispense medications without the professional discretion we've been trained to exercise.

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.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brittany Hawley". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name.

Brittany Hawley  
2025 PharmD Candidate  
Ohio Northern University