

Tuesday, December 10, 2024

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 Dr. Meredith Cory, and I am a board certified, lead clinical pharmacist. I am writing to express my concern that House Bill 73 will harm the Ohio patients whom I care for.

I agree that it is incredibly important to ensure that patients have access to medications that can help them; however, House Bill 73 creates legal infrastructure for our most vulnerable patients to be exploited by dangerous prescribing. There is a clear difference between appropriate off-label medication use and inappropriate prescribing, and House Bill 73 fails to draw a difference between these two entities. House Bill 73 opens the door for providers outside of a patient's treatment team to mislead vulnerable patients, earn their trust, and then force hospitals to entertain temporary privileges for these providers. This allows these providers to go around a patient's treatment team, prescribe medicines that are inappropriate and/or dangerous in terms of dose or risk of side effects, and force a pharmacist to dispense these medicines.

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. 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. Through mandating that pharmacists dispense medications regardless of whether they have a scientific objection, House Bill 73 would require pharmacists to dispense medications including those without a legitimate medical purpose and prevent us from adequately addressing issues identified during our drug utilization review. This would force pharmacists to abandon their legal duties, in addition to abandoning principles of their professional oath, and will create significant irreconcilable legal conflict.

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.

Meredith Cory, PharmD, BCPS

*Meredith Cory*