



STATE SENATOR BILL DEMORA 25th District

Chair Hackett, Vice Chair Lang, and members of the Senate Insurance Committee thank you for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony on SB 177, the Ohio Health Care Plan Act (OHCP). This legislation would provide single-payer, universal access to quality healthcare.

I know that every person in this room, both the Senators on the committee and everyone behind me, knows someone or has heard stories of people having to choose between healthcare costs and other necessary costs. We hear about people needing to choose between their insulin and rent, choosing between chemo and their house, or whether they will have their needed surgery or be able to feed their families. I hear these heartbreaking stories all the time, and it is even more tragic because it does not have to be this way! Senate Bill 177 will make these stories a thing of the past for all Ohioans.

According to the 2024 Health Value Dashboard, published by the Health Policy Institute of Ohio –which I have also submitted and should be on your iPads- Ohio currently ranks 44th in the nation on healthcare quality. Even though we live less healthy lives than most people in the country, we spend more on health care than people in many other states. The average annual healthcare expenditure for a single Ohioan with no children is \$3,262! This puts us at 35th in the nation in Out-of-Pocket spending, 35th in average Employee contribution to employer-sponsored insurance premiums, and 37th in Private Health Insurance Spending. And all of these poor health statistics are even worse for disadvantaged communities, such as for Black and Latino Ohioans. Ohio spends more to get less.

This is simply unacceptable, but it doesn't need to be this way. SB 177 would provide good health outcomes for all Ohioans while still being affordable. If SB 177 were to go into effect, 91% of Ohioans would see absolutely no increase in their taxes, and they would actually see more money in their paychecks due to employers not needing to provide their own healthcare plans. Passing this bill is just as economically sound as it is morally sound.

This bill has been introduced for years now, and every time it gets its one constitutionally required hearing, then it dies. I am asking all of you here to truly think about this, to think about what part of giving more people access to healthcare for less money is objectionable.

Now, I would like to pass the mic to my joint sponsor, Senator Hicks-Hudson, and after that, I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you,