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House Bill 24 Proponent Statement
Senate Insurance Committee
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Chairman Hackett, Vice Chair Lang, Ranking Minority Member Craig, and Members of the Senate Insurance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of House Bill 24, related to coverage for biomarker testing. I am Michelle Weiss, Executive Director of the Ohio Hematology Oncology Society (OHOS), representing over 220 hematology and oncology providers from private practices and hospitals across Ohio with cancer patients located in rural, suburban and urban settings.

What Are Tumor Markers (Biomarkers)?

Biomarkers are substances found in the body that indicate cancer, guide treatment decisions, and monitor therapy effectiveness. In precision medicine, biomarkers are essential for selecting targeted therapies that treat cancer based on its specific genetic or molecular characteristics.

The Importance of Biomarker Testing

Biomarker testing is crucial for:

- **Early cancer detection** when treatments are most effective.
- **Personalizing treatment plans** for optimal care.
- **Monitoring treatment progress**, ensuring patients receive the right therapies at the right time.

Challenges Due to Limited Access

Unfortunately, there is limited and disparate access to biomarker testing in Ohio. A significant percentage of cancer patients and survivors do not receive biomarker testing because it is not covered by their insurer or the out-of-pocket costs are too high. A recent study found that 78% of Ohioans are covered by plans with more restrictive coverage than what is recommended by the National Comprehensive Cancer Network® (NCCN) guidelines for several common cancers. Without this testing, patients may receive less effective treatments, experience delays in diagnosis, or face worse outcomes.

How HB 24 Will Help

House Bill 24 would expand insurance coverage for biomarker testing, ensuring that more patients can access the necessary tests to guide their care. This will:

- **Improve access** to critical tests, especially for underserved populations.
- **Ensure timely, accurate treatment**, leading to better health outcomes.
- **Lower long-term healthcare costs** by avoiding ineffective treatments.

Conclusion

House Bill 24 would expand coverage for biomarker testing in Ohio, ensuring that more patients receive the right treatment at the right time. This not only provides the most effective care for each individual but also reduces unnecessary costs by preventing ineffective treatments. For these reasons, we respectfully urge the members of the Insurance Committee to support this important legislation.

OHOS Board Members

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