



April 25th, 2025

House Committee on Health
Attn: The Honorable Schmidt, Chair
77 South High Street
Columbus, OH, 43215

Chair Schmidt and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP)—the nonprofit operating the national registry of volunteer bone marrow and blood cell donors—thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of H.B. 8, which would give Ohioans access to biomarker testing insurance coverage so that they can get the right treatment for their blood cancer or disorder at the right time.

NMDP supports biomarker testing, which is the analysis of a patient's tissue, blood, or other biospecimen for the presence of a biomarker, because it helps doctors confirm that they are giving patients the most effective treatment for their blood cancer or disorder. HLA typing, a biomarker test that matches searching patients to potential bone marrow donors, is currently the gold standard for finding the best donor for a patient. There is potential for more advanced HLA biomarker testing methods to be developed which could reduce the risk of relapse for patients, increasing patient survival and quality of life. NMDP wants to ensure that when innovation in patient-donor matching happens, all patients in Ohio who need it can have access to it.

Although 18,000 patients nationwide are diagnosed with a transplant-treatable disease or disorder every year, not everyone is benefiting from the latest advancements in medical treatment, due in part to a lack of insurance coverage. H.B. 8 will help all residents in Ohio access biomarker testing when they need it.

While most bone marrow or blood forming cell transplants NMDP facilitates are to treat cancer, transplants are also a treatment for non-malignant chronic diseases such as aplastic anemia, myelodysplastic syndrome (MDS) and sickle cell disease (SCD). Biomarker testing can also help people with these non-malignant diseases receive the most effective treatment for their specific condition. Biomarker testing is also used to assess patient risk for and diagnose Graft vs. Host Disease (GvHD) – a common and serious side effect of bone marrow transplant.

Increased access to biomarker testing can also help Ohio residents save on healthcare expenses. Comprehensive biomarker testing can help identify treatments with fewer side effects and longer survival rates and allow patients to bypass treatments that are likely to be ineffective or unnecessary. Avoiding ineffective treatments can also result in cost savings for insurers.

On behalf of NMDP, we ask that the committee support the passage of H.B. 8 to help more Ohioans access the right treatments for their blood disease or disorder at the right time.

Thank you for your consideration.

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