

May 6, 2025

Subject: HB 12 Opponent Testimony for upcoming House Health Committee Hearing

Chair Schmidt, Vice Chair Deeter, Ranking Member Somani, and members of the House Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide my personal opponent testimony on House Bill 12.

My name is Dr. Aaron Lengel. I serve as a Community Pharmacist with Kroger Pharmacy and Clinical Pharmacist and Faculty Member at the University of Toledo College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. In these roles, I have the privilege of caring directly for patients in community and clinical settings, while also helping educate and mentor the next generation of pharmacists.

As part of my work, I not only dispense medications but also apply my clinical training every day to ensure they are appropriate, effective, and safe. I also teach pharmacy students to do the same through clinical experiences in physician offices and in our Pharmacy Skills Development lab, where we prepare students to make sound therapeutic decisions within a community pharmacy setting.

I am submitting this testimony to express my strong opposition to House Bill 12, which poses a serious threat to both patient safety and pharmacy education in Ohio.

House Bill 12 would strip pharmacists of their professional responsibility and judgment to evaluate the clinical appropriateness of medications, limiting their ability to protect Ohioans from medication misuse. This bill is at odds with the legal requirements for pharmacists to act on scientific, ethical, or patient-safety-related concerns regarding the medication use process.

This stands in direct conflict with existing pharmacy law and professional standards. Under Ohio Administrative Code Rule 4729:5-5-15, pharmacists have a corresponding responsibility to ensure that prescriptions are issued for a legitimate medical purpose. We are legally required to conduct a drug utilization review (DUR) to detect potential issues such as drug interactions, contraindications, or inappropriate dosing. These reviews are grounded in clinical evidence, not personal beliefs.

By requiring pharmacists to dispense medications regardless of scientific or therapeutic concerns, House Bill 12 would force us to ignore red flags, dispense medications that may be harmful or medically unnecessary, and violate both our legal obligations and the ethical standards of our profession. This creates an impossible dilemma that undermines public trust and endangers the people we are trained to protect.

Furthermore, this bill sends a damaging message to pharmacy students, who are being taught to think critically, act ethically, and prioritize patient care above all. It would compromise their education and devalue the profession they are preparing to enter.

In summary, House Bill 12 would put Ohio patients at risk, contradict long-standing legal and professional standards, and hinder the development of future pharmacists. I respectfully urge you to reject this harmful legislation and protect the integrity of pharmacy practice in Ohio.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony and for your thoughtful consideration of how harmful House Bill 12 will be to the people of Ohio.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Lengel', with a stylized, cursive script.

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