

Testimony Opposing Ohio HB 324

Melissa A McGinnes

Pepper Pike, Cuyahoga County, Ohio

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Chair Schmidt, Vice Chair Deeter, Ranking Member Somani, and Members of the Health Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on House Bill 324. My name is Melissa A. McGinnes, and I am a resident of Pepper Pike in Cuyahoga County. I am writing to express my **strong opposition to HB 324**, a bill that would create unnecessary and harmful barriers to essential healthcare in Ohio.

This issue is personal to me. Over the past several years, several of my close friends have experienced miscarriages during very wanted pregnancies. These were deeply painful and often frightening moments for them and their families. In several cases, they needed medication to safely complete the miscarriage process and protect their health.

Timely access to evidence-based medical care made a profound difference in these situations. For some, being able to obtain medication through telehealth allowed them to receive safe and compassionate care without traveling long distances while grieving and in physical pain. For others, delays and logistical hurdles added unnecessary suffering to an already devastating experience.

The medications targeted by HB 324 are the same medications used in miscarriage management. Restricting telemedicine for these medications does not make patients safer; it creates barriers for people who are already in crisis. This bill would make it harder for Ohioans experiencing pregnancy loss to get the care they need promptly and with dignity.

Beyond miscarriage care, HB 324 is not grounded in scientific evidence. **Medication abortion has been used safely in the United States for more than 20 years**, and research from the University of California's Advancing New Standards in Reproductive Health (ANSIRH) has thoroughly debunked the claims used to justify restrictions like those in this bill. Their findings show that medication abortion is **one of the safest medical procedures**, with complication rates lower than many routine procedures such as colonoscopies or wisdom tooth removal.

HB 324 also opens the door to broader restrictions. Its language is written so broadly that it could impact telehealth delivery of other essential medications, interfering with patient care for a wide range of conditions—including chronic illnesses, mental health treatment, and reproductive healthcare beyond abortion.

Finally, it is important to recognize that **Ohioans have already made their stance clear**. In November 2023, 57% of voters passed the Reproductive Freedom Amendment, decisively rejecting government interference in personal medical decisions. HB 324 undermines this constitutional amendment and disregards the will of the people.

Ohioans deserve healthcare policy based on **medical evidence and respect for personal autonomy**, not ideology. HB 324 would roll back progress in health equity, harm those already facing barriers to care—particularly people in rural areas, people with disabilities, and low-income families—and cause real harm to those experiencing pregnancy loss.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to **reject House Bill 324** and uphold Ohioans' right to evidence-based, compassionate healthcare.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Melissa A. McGinnes

Pepper Pike, Cuyahoga County, Ohio 44124

missy.mcginnes@gmail.com