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**House Health Committee
Opponent Testimony for H.B. 182
November 19, 2025**

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Chair Scmidt, Vice Chair Deeter, Ranking Member Somani, and members of the House Health Committee:

My name is Lisa DeGeeter, and I am the Senior Director of Policy and Prevention at the Ohio Domestic Violence Network. Thank you for the opportunity to provide opposition testimony on H.B. 172. ODVN is Ohio federally designated domestic violence coalition. ODVN's 76 local programs throughout the state work every day with domestic violence survivors and their children, to help them find safety and healing.

The fundamental flaw with H.B. 172 is that it assumes that all parents want what is best for their children or even that all parents have a concern about their children's well-being. It is understandable why loving parents would assume that every other parent shares their concerns. Professionals who work with children and families know however that not every child has that kind of parent.

The law as it currently stands permits 6 sessions or 30 days of no cost counseling whichever is less. It is designed for children with no other recourse, children whose only paths to safety and healing comes from agencies that exist to help them such as domestic violence, sexual violence and child abuse programs. Very few mental health providers in private practice or even those public mental health agencies in the state can afford to give away their services. Frequently the services that are provided under this provision are grant funded for specific targeted populations to help address the issue of child abuse. H. B. 172 eliminates the best route to safety for the children who are most at risk. It reduces child's safety and offender accountability, it extends suffering and allows an abusive parent the opportunity to deny their child a way to heal.

On behalf of ODVN and our member programs across the state, thank you for permitting us an opportunity to express our concerns. I am happy to answer any questions.