



Opponent Testimony to HB88
November 11, 2025

Crime Survivors Speak Ohio is a coalition of survivors dedicated to advancing safety, healing, and justice in our communities. We work directly with people who have experienced harm, connecting them to the healing and resources they need. Our mission is to ensure that survivors' voices are heard in policymaking and that Ohio invests in real solutions that prevent violence and promote well-being.

For these reasons, we strongly oppose HB 88.

As survivors, what we want most is for what happened to us never to happen again. Achieving that goal requires lawmakers to follow evidence and invest in what actually prevents harm, not what merely sounds "tough on crime." HB 88 fails that test. It would not make Ohioans safer. Instead, it would expand costly prison sentences that do little to stop the cycle of addiction or violence.

This proposal would divert millions of dollars away from prevention and healing, and toward punishment that research shows does not work. Spending \$60 million a year to incarcerate people struggling with addiction will not stop the spread of fentanyl or make our neighborhoods safer. We know that incarceration is far less effective than treatment, recovery, and community-based support. Nationally, victims of crime consistently express a preference for investments in treatment, not prison.

What if Ohio spent sixty million dollars on substance use disorder and addiction services, behavioral health services, effective and safe alternatives to prison, more rape crisis centers, Trauma Recovery Centers or funds for victims compensation, or all of the above? This is where we need to make bigger investments to public safety and ensure survivors of crime have the support they need.

We agree that fentanyl and other drugs are a problem that needs to be solved. We believe it is best solved through deep and sustained commitment to prevention and healing rather than just continually ratcheting up punishment after the harm has already been done.



The reality is that HB 88 would have negative effects in communities most impacted by drug addiction. We urge you to vote against HB 88 and encourage exploring alternative solutions that better serve the interests and well-being of our communities.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Pritchard
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Crime Survivors Speak Ohio Volunteer Leaders