

Chair Gross, Vice Chair Barhorst, Ranking Member Baker, and members of the House Medicaid Committee,

Thank you for considering this testimony. My name is Eric Kim, and I am a family medicine physician in Cleveland, Ohio. I strongly urge you to remove two troubling items from Ohio's state operating budget. Both could have devastating impacts on Ohio families who depend on Medicaid expansion for their healthcare coverage.

Specifically, I'm asking you to remove the following two items:

Section 126.70 — This Medicaid Trigger Language could immediately end Medicaid expansion in Ohio if the federal government reduces its share of paying for the program's costs.

Section 126.10 — Under this Federal Mirror Language, if the federal government pauses, suspends, or reduces funding for a federal program, Ohio could do the same to any similar state-level program that uses federal funds.

Over a third of the patients I serve rely on Medicaid to cover their medical expenses. In some cases, these are people with conditions like heart failure and kidney failure who, without medical coverage, would not be able to continue receiving life-saving therapies. In other cases, these are people with diseases like diabetes, high blood pressure, and metabolic syndrome, which, if untreated, will lead to life-threatening conditions like heart failure and kidney failure.

All people are deserving of life-saving care. Only the most heartless would refuse my former patient who had to go to the emergency room for kidney dialysis due to his kidney failure because he could not afford regular treatment. How much more did he have to suffer to stay alive this way? How much more did we as a society have to pay to keep him alive this way?

In the years I have served my patients, I have seen Medicaid coverage keep many people alive. But I have also seen it save far more people from having life-threatening diseases in the first place.

I ask you to consider my testimony and remove these two harmful items from Ohio's operating budget. By doing so, you would save many Ohioans' lives, keep them from debilitating conditions, and ultimately reduce the amount of healthcare spending that we are ethically obligated to provide.

Thank you again for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,

Eric Kim MD PhD