

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

My name is Susan Fain. I am a born-and-raised Ohioan and current fourth year medical student, and I am planning to become a family medicine doctor. I'm writing to urge you to remove the following two items from Ohio's state operating budget:

- 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.

When 770,000 Ohioans rely on Medicaid expansion to afford healthcare, ending this expansion would have devastating consequences for your constituents. I plan to become a primary care physician because I believe strongly in the value of preventative care, and Medicaid payments are essential to provide comprehensive primary care to many of our community members. Training in a safety net system, I witness firsthand what happens when people with chronic conditions do not have access to preventative healthcare, and it is tremendous physical harm, like disabling strokes or heart attacks, and resultant high healthcare costs that further entrench them in cycles of poverty. Sickness is not distributed evenly among all people, and in the healthcare field, we see who suffers the most: it is our patients with chronic conditions, our patients who are low-income, and our patients who are disabled—the people who rely most on Medicaid for healthcare coverage.

In a country where medical debt is the leading cause of financial ruin<sup>1</sup>, it is unconscionable to propose a budget that could take away healthcare coverage for hundreds of thousands of Ohioans. I ask you to consider my testimony and remove these two disturbing items from Ohio's operating budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Susan Fain

1. Himmelstein DU, Lawless RM, Thorne D, Foohey P, Woolhandler S. Medical Bankruptcy: Still Common Despite the Affordable Care Act. *Am J Public Health*. 2019;109(3):431-433. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2018.304901