

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

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Dr. Aphrodite Papadakis. I am a family physician practicing in Cleveland Heights, 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.

Cuyahoga County is home to more than 400,000 residents who rely on Medicaid for access to healthcare. I have seen firsthand the life-changing impact Medicaid expansion has had for patients in my practice. They are able to obtain their necessary health screenings, afford critical medications to manage chronic conditions like diabetes and hypertension, and obtain or more easily maintain gainful employment.

The results of a 2018 survey evaluating Medicaid expansion verified my observations. Recipients reported better overall access to primary care, ability to find employment, and additionally, better access to mental health services which are more essential than ever in our post-pandemic reality.

The end of Medicaid expansion will leave these patients uninsured, without access to affordable and essential preventive and disease modifying care, and squeeze all community health centers and safety net hospitals to the point where critical services will likely need to be cut.

I ask you to consider my testimony and remove these two harmful items from Ohio's operating budget.

By doing so, you would ensure the continued progress of Ohio families working towards more financial

independence and well-being. This in turn elevates all of us.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Aphrodite Papadakis MD

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