

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

Thank you for receiving my testimony. My name is Susan Haas. I am a resident of Hopewell, Licking County, Ohio. I am a retired attorney who spent most of my career representing Social Security Disability and SSI claimants. I also served as a Legal Services attorney, helping working people obtain and keep Medicaid health care.

I'm deeply troubled by two items in Ohio's proposed state operating budget. Both could have devastating impacts on Ohioans – not just families who depend on Medicaid expansion for their healthcare coverage, but also rural hospitals and clinics that cannot exist to serve only wealthier patients, and the entire communities where doctors, nurses and patients live, work and go to school.

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.

Throughout my career, I saw over and over again that Medicaid is not only the difference between life and death, sickness and health. Overwhelmingly, *Medicaid is the difference between a person's being able to work, or not.* I retired before the ACA went into effect, and a great number of my clients might have been able to continue working had they only had access to medical care. They applied for disability reluctantly, knowing that the only reason they were too sick and/or Disabled to work was that they couldn't access medical care that would restore them to better health.

Taking medical care away from people who may be in the midst of cancer treatment or other chronic illness is not only cruel, it's counterproductive. It means fewer people able to work, fewer nurses and doctors bringing high paying jobs to Ohio, fewer rural hospitals and clinics that serve people regardless of income.

Chair Gross, members of the Committee, I ask you to please remove these two dangerous items from Ohio's operating budget. By doing so, you will protect more than a million Ohioans who depend on Medicaid expansion for their own health, their children's, and/or their hospital's continued existence.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.