

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

Thank you for allowing me to testify. My name is Glen McClain. I am seventh-year MD/JD student at the University of Cincinnati and a resident of Cincinnati. 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.

As a medical student on Medicaid because of Ohio's decision to expand Medicaid eligibility to students, I have benefited tremendously from the health coverage I receive under the program. With an intensive academic schedule and virtually no time to work, utilizing Medicaid in lieu of cost-prohibitive marketplace or student insurance plans has allowed me to devote the last seven years in graduate education to learn how to adequately care for Ohio patients instead of attempting to find a second job to afford health care. Further, it has allowed me to access high quality, low-cost care for my own health conditions, reducing the time I would otherwise spend in clinics and hospitals. After losing my parents' insurance coverage, receiving Medicaid coverage allowed me to secure health benefits and continue to ensure my health is prioritized so I can continue to take care of my patients.

But Medicaid expansion in Ohio has done more than just help me. Conservative estimates have shown that Medicaid expansion has created thousands of new jobs in Ohio, largely as a result of increased economic activity. Sick people are unable to work, and increased hospital admissions and lengths of stay keep workers out of the channel of commerce. Medicaid is a key source of coverage for those in the bottom 40% of the income distribution. Research has shown that Medicaid expansion reduced the amount of credit card debt in collections in covered individuals, boosting the economic security of those individuals and increasing their purchasing power.

Rather than prematurely introducing language to gut Medicaid expansion in Ohio before the federal budget is passed, Ohio legislators should be working with federal legislators to protect the Medicaid program. If Medicaid is cut by \$880 million as suggested in the preliminary House budget resolution, the poorest Ohioans will be hit the hardest. The Economic Policy Institute estimates that the poorest fifth of Ohio families will lose roughly 8% of their money income if federal cuts are enacted. This will largely affect Ohioans in rural districts, where unemployment is the highest and resources are few and far between, and who will receive little to no benefit from extending the expiring federal tax cuts. Hospitals in these same rural districts largely rely on Medicaid funding for their slim operating margins, and any number of cuts would risk apocalyptic closures of rural hospitals, drastically reducing rural healthcare access. Between

2010 and 2021, more than 100 rural hospitals closed across the U.S., the majority of which were located in states that did not expand Medicaid.

I ask you to consider my testimony and remove these two devastating and unprecedented items from Ohio's operating budget. By doing so, you would save thousands of lives, protect the poorest Ohioans, and prevent an unmitigated healthcare disaster in Ohio. A legislature that supports tax cuts for the rich and guts healthcare for the poor is myopic at best and malicious at worst. We need Ohio to act swiftly to affirm Medicaid access will continue for those who desperately need it.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Glen McClain, JD