

**Opponent Testimony for H.Con.Res.14**  
**House Medicaid Committee**  
**4 March 2025**

**Rachael Black, Medical Student**

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 Rachael Black. I am a medical student at The Ohio State University College of Medicine. 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.

I am from a rural Appalachian community in southern Ohio. Growing up, I was one of the lucky children whose parents had jobs that provided insurance. This was the case because my parents were able to drive over an hour to work in Cincinnati, a privilege many in my town did not have. There, you were limited to a few job options if you didn't have a car: the plastic factory, Dollar General, or the local farms. None of these places provided insurance. Because of this, most people in my town relied on Medicaid to be able to afford their medical care. Cancer was a huge problem in my community, and many of the people who would be dead without care are alive to this day because of Medicaid.

During college, I worked in an urban emergency department. My job was to connect patients with Substance Use Disorder to treatment facilities to help them recover from their addictions. The vast majority of these patients relied on Medicaid to pay for the programs. Without it, the opioid crisis is going to rear its head in a way we have not seen yet. This administration is so focused on fighting the opioid crisis, but they fail to acknowledge that it cannot be stopped unless patients can receive the help that they need to stop using. To lose Medicaid access would bar these patients from ever being able to recover, and the crisis will continue at a level we have not seen yet. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services report that total healthcare costs were 30 percent less for individuals receiving Medically Assisted Therapy - such as

buprenorphine or methadone - than for individuals who not receiving it. This service is only available to many patients because of Medicaid. To lose it is going to skyrocket healthcare spending in Ohio.

I ask you to consider my testimony and remove these two disturbing items from Ohio's operating budget. By doing so, you would save thousands of Ohioans' lives by allowing them to seek necessary preventative healthcare and protect the 700,000+ Ohio children and families who depend on Medicaid expansion. To approve this is to place thousands of Ohioans in harm's way and will succeed in making Ohio one of the most unhealthy states in the country. Please vote in the best interest of the people who you swore an oath to serve to the best of your ability.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Rachael Black