



Ohio House Ways and Means

Testimony on HB 28

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Chairman Roemer White, Vice-Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Troy, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony on House Bill 28. My name is Liz Henrich, and I am the CEO of the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities. We represent Ohio's local Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health (ADAMH) Boards.

I am writing to express our concerns with HB 28 as currently written.

Ohio's 50 Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health Boards, covering all 88 counties, provide community members with access to a statutorily defined continuum of care, inclusive of prevention, treatment, and recovery supports in communities throughout the state. Boards enter into contracts with community mental health and addiction services providers for the provision of these services and supports utilizing a mix of federal, state, and local funds.

Currently, 47 Boards have approved property tax levies in one or more of their counties (78 total counties) that are used to support community mental health and addiction services. These levies collectively generate approximately \$400 million each year to fund prevention, treatment, and recovery support services throughout Ohio. ADAMH Boards engage in extensive community campaigns to ensure voters understand the issue on the ballot, the implications for their tax bill and how funds are used. These efforts have led to broad voter support of ADAMH Board levies for many years now.

We believe that conversations about tax changes and/or modification need to ensure that these voter-approved investments in critical, lifesaving mental health and addiction services are not diminished. Replacement levies are an important fiscal tool for ADAMH Boards and we have concerns about the potential loss of the ability to replace their current levy amounts should HB 28 be enacted as drafted.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony. Should you have any questions, please contact me at ehenrich@oacbha.org.