



Ohio Senate Education Committee  
Nancy Eigel-Miller, Executive Director of 1N5  
May 14, 2025

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chairman Blessing, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill (HB) 96. My name is Nancy Eigel-Miller, and I am the executive director of 1N5.

On July 28, 2008, I lost my husband, Jim, to suicide. In the aftermath of that profound loss, my two daughters and I chose to turn our grief into action. We founded 1N5, a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing mental health education and suicide prevention across Southwest Ohio. Our name, 1N5, reflects an urgent reality: one in five people live with a mental health condition, and as many as one in three youth experience similar struggles. But mental health is not just about diagnoses; it is essential for everyone, impacting every aspect of our well-being, relationships, and success in life. Today, 1N5 works with over 300 public and private schools in 11 counties, helping more than 240,000 students to provide young people with hope, tools to build resilience, and a stronger sense of connection.

Our partner schools rely on us to help fulfill several state laws<sup>1</sup> that require schools instruct students in suicide awareness and prevention, train teachers in youth suicide awareness and prevention, and train

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<sup>1</sup> Ohio Revised Code 3313.5318, 3313.60, and 3319.073.

athletic coaches in student mental health – all on an ongoing basis. Because educators often feel ill-equipped and lack sufficient time or resources to complete this training, 1N5 helps schools with this responsibility and ensures students receive essential mental health education – all at virtually no cost to schools. Our partnership is not one and done; we walk alongside educators, parents, and students throughout the year to foster a culture of mental wellness that extends beyond the classroom.

For the first time, our organization received funding<sup>2</sup> from the state in January of 2025, which is helping us expand into 50 new schools and reach 40,000 new students. The House-passed version of HB 96 maintains critical funding<sup>3</sup> for our organization and for Ohio students in fiscal year 2026 and 2027.

**We urge you to maintain this much-needed funding.**

This support will help our team to:

- expand into 70 new schools, supporting 60,000 new students and their teachers, including in rural and Appalachian areas of the state, which have some of the highest suicide rates in the state;
- train and certify additional program managers and educators to meet the surging demand for our programming;
- and continue to expand education to parents and caregivers so they can support the mental health needs of their children, as well as care for their own mental health. On average caregiver

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<sup>2</sup> Section 6 of Senate Bill 54 of the 135<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

<sup>3</sup> Section 337.117 of House Bill 96. MHACD31. GRF ALI 336519, Community Projects.

education has the potential to reach 1500 parents per school served.

Investments in prevention matter, and schools are on the front lines of this urgent issue. These initiatives reduce the long-term costs of crisis intervention and, most importantly, save lives. By equipping students with the knowledge and tools to support their mental well-being, we are fostering safer, healthier school environments where every student can thrive—both in the classroom and as they enter the workforce.

As the youth mental health crisis intensifies, the stakes have never been higher, but neither has our resolve. Together, we can change the trajectory for Ohio's youth, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to build a healthy, hopeful future.

Chairman Brenner and members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for your time and consideration. I welcome any questions you may have.