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Signature Health, Inc.

Senate Finance Committee

Testimony on Substitute House Bill 96

May 27, 2025

Chairman Cirino, Vice Chair Chavez, Ranking Member Hudson and Members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Substitute House Bill 96, state operating budget. My name is Jonathan Lee, and I am CEO of Signature Health, Inc.

Signature Health, Inc is a Community Health Center and Community Mental Health Center with locations in Ashtabula, Lake and Cuyahoga Counties. We serve 35,000 patients annually for primary care, addiction and mental health treatment, dental, pharmacy and lab services. We focus on serving patients with moderate financial means with approximately 90% of our patients falling at 200% of poverty or below.

I would like to commend Governor DeWine and the Ohio House of Representatives for prioritizing the health and well-being of Ohioans through their investments in critical health initiatives. There are several provisions in Sub HB 96 that Community Health Centers (CHCs) strongly support, including:

- Funding for School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs),
- The Ohio Primary Care Workforce Initiative (OPCWI),
- Investments in dental and vision care for children in underserved areas.

Signature Health currently operates a school based health center in partnership with the Wickliffe Schools, we train numerous student clinicians including counselors, social workers, nurse practitioner students and psychiatric residents. We also provide on-site behavioral healthcare in Willoughby, Mentor, Painesville Township, Ashtabula City, and Ashtabula Township schools.



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These investments directly align with the mission of Community Health Centers: expanding access to comprehensive, quality, and affordable health care across Ohio. I respectfully ask that you refer to testimony submitted by the Ohio Association of Community Health Centers (OACHC) for full remarks and additional considerations.

Today, I will focus my testimony on two areas in HB 96 – The Medicaid Group 8 Trigger, and 340B.

House Bill 96, As Introduced, included language that would have prohibited the use of contract pharmacies in the federal 340B Drug Pricing Program for Medicaid patients. This program has been critical in allowing Signature Health and all Community Health Centers to stretch limited federal and state dollars, delivering vital services such as medical and dental care, behavioral health, school-based health care, and substance use disorder treatments, to name a few. In my Health Center that means dental care for low income patients with Medicare, Prescription delivery for patients who transportation issues, 24/7 mobile mental health crisis care to respond with law enforcement, child care for patients in addiction treatment, availability for walk in services, case management to help people find shelter and housing, and partnerships for homeless veterans outreach.

We commend the Ohio House of Representatives for removing this deeply concerning provision from the As Introduced House Bill 96—and respectfully request the Senate to protect Community Health Centers' access to life-saving medications and services for Ohio's most vulnerable populations through 340B.

Secondly, we are concerned about the language requiring immediate termination of Medicaid coverage for Group VIII members if the federal medical assistance percentage (FMAP) falls below 90%. Medicaid expansion is vital not only for individual health outcomes but also for the operational stability of Community Health Centers like ours.



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Many of the patients who fall into Group VIII present to our Health Center for Opioid Addiction Treatment. We've all heard the stories of people who have severe addictions that started with an injury. The death toll from opioids has been catastrophic, but treatment works and people do recover if they have access. Recently we've all been cheering a large drop in Opioid overdose deaths. Now is not the time to allow cut-off access to this critical care.

We respectfully urge the removal—or at minimum, the revision—of this provision to avoid disrupting essential care for vulnerable Ohioans and threatening the sustainability of CHCs across the state.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these critical issues. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully,

Jonathan Lee