	GENERAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE
	Witness Form

Today's Date 02/16/2025

Name: Paul Laurello

Address: 4731 Manchester Ct., Austinburg, Ohio 44010

Telephone: 440-536-0359

Organization Representing: Ohioian

Testifying on Bill Number: Senate Bill 59

Testimony: _____ Verbal ____x____ Written _____ Both

Testifying As: _____ Proponent ____X____ Opponent _____ Interested Party

Are you a Registered Lobbyist? _____ Yes ____X____ No

Special Requests: _____

Written testimony is a public record and may be posted on the Ohio Senate's website

Dear Honorable Members of the Committee,

I appreciate the opportunity to speak before you today. As a physically disabled individual who relies on medical cannabis to manage my chronic pain and improve my quality of life, I am deeply concerned about the potential effects of the proposed legislation on my ability to access affordable and effective medicine. Specifically, I am opposed to the proposals to increase taxes and redirect them away from local municipalities, as well as the introduction of a 100mg potency cap on cannabis products. These provisions would create unnecessary obstacles for individuals like myself who depend on cannabis for medical purposes.

One of my primary concerns is the proposal to increase taxes on cannabis and redistribute the revenue away from local municipalities. As a disabled person, I rely on local services such as transportation, healthcare, and other community resources that are often funded by local taxes. Local governments, including the ones I live in, use cannabis tax revenue to support these critical services, and removing this funding would directly affect my ability to access the services I depend on. Furthermore, increasing taxes on cannabis products will only make my medicine more expensive. As someone with limited mobility and often a fixed income, I simply cannot afford to pay more for my cannabis. This will force me to either cut back on my treatment or turn to the black market, where the products are not regulated for safety and quality. Both of these outcomes are unacceptable.

The proposed potency cap of 100mg on cannabis products is another significant concern for me as a cannabis consumer. Many people with physical disabilities, including myself, require higher-potency products to effectively manage our symptoms. Chronic pain, muscle spasms, and other conditions require stronger doses of cannabis to provide adequate relief. A 100mg potency cap would severely limit my ability to find the right products that work for me. I would be forced to purchase larger quantities of lower-potency products, which would not only be inconvenient but also more expensive. This would increase the burden on people with disabilities, who already face challenges related to affordability, access, and mobility. Additionally, many patients like myself use cannabis as a means of reducing reliance on other, more dangerous medications. By limiting potency, this cap could push us back toward opioid-based medications, which have much higher risks and side effects. For people with physical disabilities, cannabis is a vital, safer alternative, and limiting its potency would reduce the quality of life for many patients who rely on it.

In conclusion, I strongly oppose both the tax increases that take away from local municipalities and the 100mg potency cap on cannabis products. These provisions would create unnecessary barriers to accessing affordable and effective cannabis, especially for individuals like myself who depend on it for medical reasons. I urge you to reconsider these proposals and ensure that medical cannabis remains accessible, affordable, and effective for all Ohioans, particularly those with disabilities who rely on it for relief and improved quality of life.
Thank you for your time and consideration. I trust that you will take into account the needs of vulnerable populations, like people with physical disabilities, when making your decisions.

Sincerely,

Paul Laurello
Disabled Ohioan who relies on Cannabis for relief