

Jason Koma, MHA
Senate Health Committee
Testimony on HB 96 (State Operating Budget)
May 13, 2025

Chair Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson and Ranking Member Liston, and members of the Senate Health Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 96, the state operating budget. I am Jason Koma, the executive director of the Charitable Healthcare Network.

The Charitable Healthcare Network is the statewide network of free and charitable providers in Ohio. We work to achieve our mission to strengthen and ensure high-quality health care for people who are vulnerable with and through a network of 56 free clinics and charitable providers in Ohio. This diverse network includes free clinics, charitable clinics, rural health centers, charitable pharmacies, and counseling centers, among others. As of 2024, our 56 network institutions serve 86 of Ohio's 88 counties.

The financial support from the Ohio General Assembly, the Ohio Department of Health and the governor's office is essential to support our care for the uninsured and underserved populations across the state. This crucial support of general revenue funds through the Free Clinic Safety Net line item within the Ohio Department of Health is currently at \$1.75M per fiscal year. It serves as a vital lifeline to Ohio's free clinics. This funding was included in the governor's budget blueprint and was also in the version passed by the Ohio House. We are asking the Senate to maintain this vital support.

With the support of this funding, in 2024, Ohio's free and charitable providers delivered nearly 715,000 healthcare services – primary care, specialty care, prescriptions, and education, among others. The total value of these services was approximately \$224M, providing vital healthcare services to the most vulnerable in our state at little to no cost to those patients. Again, we are asking for your continued support of the Free Clinic Safety Net Services line item.

As I close, I want to provide additional context on the patients served by our clinics. They are hard-working Ohioans who often work more than one job but have no health insurance. These are moms, dads, brothers and sisters. Here are just two brief stories on the impact of free and charitable clinics in Ohio.

In July 2024, we met a patient who works full-time but despite her full-time employment, she cannot afford health insurance. This patient is a breast cancer survivor, currently in remission, but her health battle cost her a better-paying job with superior benefits. She came to us with numbness in her fingers, but due to her financial situation, she couldn't afford the diagnostic tests needed to determine the cause. During her visits, she broke down in tears as she shared the weight of her ongoing medical and social challenges. In response, we immediately involved one of our care coordinators to support her during the medical visit. Together with our volunteer provider, our care coordination team is now working closely with her to

address both her healthcare and social needs. This includes connecting her with dental care, establishing a medical home, and guiding her through the healthcare system to ensure she receives the diagnostic testing required to manage her health.

“Maria”, a 42-year-old mother of three, came to us last spring. Maria had been living with undiagnosed diabetes for years. Without health insurance and working two part-time jobs, she prioritized her children’s needs over her health, as most parents do. By the time she arrived at our clinic, she was suffering from fatigue, vision issues, and frequent infections that affected her ability to work. With funding supporting our lab equipment and medications, we were able to diagnose her quickly and begin treatment immediately. Our patient education staff worked with Maria to develop a sustainable nutrition and health plan. Over the following months, Maria’s condition stabilized. She had the energy to not only to be fully present with her family but also advance to find a higher-paying single job with benefits. When asked what the care meant to her, she said, “You gave me my life back. I don’t feel invisible anymore.”

This funding gave her, her life back and supports the state’s free clinics and charitable providers who are the backbone of our healthcare safety net but we cannot do so without your support. Again, we are asking for your continued support of the Free Clinic Safety Net Services line item.

Thank you and I’d be happy to answer any questions.



CHARITABLE HEALTHCARE NETWORK

ABOUT

Charitable Healthcare Network (CHN) strengthens and ensures high-quality healthcare for vulnerable populations. Our network includes free and charitable clinics, rural health centers, charitable pharmacies, and counseling centers. As of 2024, our 56 network institutions serve 86 of Ohio's 88 counties.



OUR VALUE OF CARE

	2024 Services	Value of Services
Primary Care Visits	44,029	\$17,875,774
Specialty Visits	8,983	\$7,455,890
Vision Visits	6,954	\$3,171,024
Dental Visits	4,684	\$1,667,504
Behavioral Health	3,006	\$853,704
Social Services/Case Management	12,596	\$2,116,128
Pharmacy Services	51,498	\$9,012,150
Other Clinical Services	32,213	\$4,831,950
Education	95,619	\$16,017.40
Outreach and Screenings	42,675	\$6,401,250
Prescriptions	346,553	\$121,293,550
Tests (Diagnostic + Laboratory)	62,021	\$32,472,600
Insurance Enrollment	5,096	\$764,400
→ Total		715,927 (+9%) \$223,933,664 (+9%) *

STATEWIDE IMPACT & SUPPORT

CHN works directly with ODH to support free and charitable providers in Ohio with general revenue funds through the Free Clinic Safety Net line item. CHN is incredibly appreciative of the support from Governor DeWine, the Ohio legislature and the Ohio Department of Health for including \$1.75 million a year in the state's biennial budget. With that funding, the total value of care provided in 2024 reached \$224 million, underscoring the vital role these clinics play in preventing costly medical emergencies, keeping Ohio's workforce healthy, and reducing the financial strain on hospitals and taxpayers.

CONNECT WITH A FREE CLINIC

CHN is available as a resource for your office to help answer questions from your constituents seeking services from a free or charitable provider. Please contact us at **(614) 914-6458** and we can help connect anyone to this care. Also, our website **www.charitablehealth.org** has an interactive map of all these providers in Ohio.

*Healthcare cost values are based on data from the 2022 Healthcare Bluebook



CONNECT WITH US



OUR NETWORK

NORTHWEST OHIO:

- Community of Hope Free Health Clinic
- CommunityCare Free Clinic
- Compassion Medical Clinic of Williams Co.
- Free Clinic of Fulton Co.
- Halim Clinic
- ONU HealthWise
- Toledo/Lucas Co. CareNet

CENTRAL OHIO:

- Asian Health Initiative
- Charitable Pharmacy of Central Ohio
- Columbus Free Clinic
- Dwell Free Clinic
- Free Clinic of Licking Co.
- Grace Clinics of Ohio
- Helping Hands Health and Wellness Center
- La Clínica Latina
- LifeCare Alliance
- New Life Community Outreach
- Physicians CareConnection
- Stowe Mission
- The Breathing Association
- Victory Ministries Center of Hope
- Vineyard Community Clinic
- Vineyard Free Health Clinics
- Vineyard Free Medical Clinic of Delaware
- Vocalize Columbus

SOUTHWEST OHIO:

- Compassionate Care of Shelby Co.
- Good Neighbor House
- Good Samaritan Free Health Center

- Health Partners Free Clinic
- Living Well Clinic
- Open Arms Health Clinic
- Oxford Free Clinic
- Reach Out Montgomery Co.
- St. Mary's Connect
- SVDP Cincinnati Charitable Pharmacy

NORTHEAST OHIO:

- Ashland Christian Health Center
- Beacon Charitable Pharmacy
- Cleveland Ibn Sina Clinic
- Eva Women's Clinic
- Faithful Servants Care Center
- Free Clinic of Medina Co.
- Hartville Migrant Ministry
- Lake Co. Free Clinic
- Lorain Co. Free Clinic
- Medwish Medworks
- Midlothian Free Clinic
- Ohio Valley Health Center
- OPEN M Free Clinic
- Salaam Clinic
- SOAR Student-Run Free Clinic
- Tuscarawas Clinic for the Working Uninsured
- Viola Startzman Clinic

SOUTHEAST OHIO:

- Hope Clinic of Ross Co.
- OU Heritage Community Clinic
- OU George Hill Counseling
- Rising Suns Non-Profit Pharmacy

