

# HB 96 WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: 05/12/2025

Name: Evalea Cortez, Student At Meadowdale Career Technology Center, reading for Carlito Cabral and Dyi'lai'kei Bass.

Are you representing: Yourself **Organization**

Organization (If Applicable): Dayton Public Schools

Position/Title: Student

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Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? **Yes**

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): House Bill 96

Specific Issue: Youth Mental Health Funding

Are you testifying as a: **Interested Party**

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? **Yes**

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? **1-2 minutes**

Please provide a brief statement on your position: **The following testimony advocates for more funding for mental health and addiction resources for youth.**

### **CC3: “More Rehabs Need To Be In the City“**

We hope to address drug addictions because of how many deaths and new dangerous drugs that are been getting in the U.S. We need a change to these drug addictions and it will only reduce if everyone works together. This problem affects the community because if one of your peers died you and everyone around you that knew them would be saddened. The families would be hurt as well. Overdoses are a real big thing and scares families. Many celebrities and rappers that I've listened to have died from this problem. People sell the black market drugs to the streets and it just gets passed along from person to person. You could get addicted if you were to take a highly addictive drug if convinced to take it by another peer. If nothing is done to the drug addictions people will keep dying and drugs would just be everywhere affecting everyone. We need more awareness from the community and yourself so we could reduce the amount of cases from drug deaths. Everyone has to be on the same side so we can stop the deaths. **More rehabs need to be in the city. I would spend tax dollars on the community and rehabs so the community knows they're just not alone but we're together.** I will know taxpayer dollars were put to good use once overdose deaths reduce and less drugs are out there. **Will the Ohio General Assembly increase funds for youth addiction services?**

(pause to hear their response)

**Dyi'lai'kei Bass: 'How many people have died because we didn't listen?' Read this story in the [Dayton Daily News](#).**

It doesn't make sense to talk about drug addiction and mental health separately. The two are intertwined. Drug addiction is happening all over the world, but we can start in Dayton because we got hit hard. Drugs are addicting, deadly, and impact people I know personally. I've seen drugs turn people into addicts and make them extremely violent. People are not taking the problem of drug addiction seriously, and when they do, the impulse is to punish the user. The police just treat it as a crime instead of asking what makes them over use drugs or what makes people sell them.

The main cause of addiction is mental health struggles. People that have mental health issues could be trying to show signs that they need help, but people ignore them. A loved one might act out of character in a way they never acted before, but instead of recognizing the signs that they're struggling with their mental health, they get called insane or crazy. How many people have died because we didn't listen?

People need to understand the situation better before they just push the problem aside and treat it as a crime. I recommend that governments spend funds on making more mental health rehab centers to meet the need. I imagine a place to never get judged and also educate people about drugs and what they do to you mentally, emotionally, and physically. We will know it's successful if you see how many people avoid death or overdose. While we push for better mental health services, it's important to model a different kind of peer pressure: let's peer pressure people to get off drugs and get the help they need. Let's pressure our leaders to make sure that help is ready when people are ready to heal.

– Dyi'lai'kei Bass is a junior at Meadowdale Career Technology Center in the Business Pathway.

