



NEWTOWN POLICE DEPARTMENT  
*Colonel Thomas W. Synan Jr.*  
*Chief of Police*



3536 Church St.  
Newtown, Ohio 45244  
513-561-7697 Main / 513-561-7506 Fax  
tsynan@villageofnewtown.com

May 14, 2025

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Liston, and Esteemed Members of Senate Health Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Hamilton County Addiction Response Coalition. I am deeply concerned with the proposed reduction in overdose strategies, including the reduction of funding for naloxone (Narcan) within the budget outline in HB 96.

As a first responder on the frontlines of the opioid epidemic I have seen the damage left behind and the lives lost to this epidemic. I have also seen the lives saved and those getting into long-term recovery. I have seen those lost before we were given the tools and resources such as naloxone that could have been saved. I also was on the frontlines when carfentanyl first made its appearance in Cincinnati, Hamilton County. During the week of August 19<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> of 2016, Hamilton County experienced nearly 200 overdoses in that week. Unfortunately, 3 people lost their lives. But first responders and civilians alike were able to save the others with the use of naloxone. Almost everyone survived this terrifying new drug because of the collaborations with community groups and the State of Ohio helping to provide funding for naloxone.

Those were not just lives saved but a prevention of families grieving and a lasting impact our community and our state did not see a mass casualty death incident. For our community naloxone is the first step tool to getting someone connected to treatment, then to recovery; and ultimately a job, transportation, housing and family back. It is an investment on the front-end that pays the dividend of a life back and paying forward to their community.

Although there has been significant progress made in reducing overdose deaths across Ohio, we must not lose sight of the next new, more dangerous drug is right around the corner. We must also not become singularly focused that naloxone is only for individuals experiencing frequent and long-term substance use. The proliferation of fake prescription pills is putting those not in throws of addiction at risk. High school, a college kid, the adult purchasing a pill they believe to be one thing but it turns out to have fentanyl in it. This is a group we have focused on giving naloxone to so they can be saved if they accidentally and unknowingly take something with fentanyl in it.

I am urging you to protect Ohio's communities by fully restoring the Department of Health's Chronic Disease, Injury Prevention, and Drug Overdose Line Item 440482 funding to its original levels. It is critical for Ohio and those we serve on the frontlines to have this life-saving tool. A tool that enables a person to recovery and an opportunity to live a full and productive life.

Sincerely,

Col. Thomas W. Synan Jr.  
Chief of Police, Newtown Police Department  
Co-Founder, Co-Chair Hamilton County Addiction Response Coalition