

Chair Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Liston and members of the Ohio Senate Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer my support for the provision of HB 96 that would require the Ohio Department of Health to create and distribute materials about the symptoms and treatment of Type 1 Diabetes (T1D). My name is Cassandra (Cass) Freeland, and I am the mom of a son with type 1 diabetes, diagnosed in 2016 at age 11. I spent several years working in a school environment in a parent and family engagement role, and I volunteer as an advocate for people with T1D.

Type 1 diabetes (or T1D) is an **autoimmune condition** in which the body attacks the beta cells that produce insulin in the pancreas. It is not caused by diet or exercise. People with type 1 diabetes are reliant on insulin to stay alive.

While it was traditionally called juvenile diabetes, **T1D can happen at any age**. This provision is important because the **incidence of T1D is increasing significantly across all age groups**. The [SEARCH study for diabetes](#) found that T1D was growing at 1.8% per year in people under 18. That doesn't sound like a lot until you compound it. Raising awareness of the symptoms and the screening process is important, and it could save lives through early detection.

In addition, while there is a genetic component to the disease, **85% of people diagnosed with T1D do not have a first-generation relative with the disease**. This means that they are not expecting it. That is why it is important to provide this information in some manner to families and students **at all grade levels and not just elementary families**, as outlined by the provision in HB 96. Parents and teachers alike are perhaps less likely to notice the two most frequent symptoms – frequent urination and extreme thirst - in a more independent child. I hope you will consider this change.

You can learn about the national and global impact of T1D on the [T1D Index](#), released in 2022. I am also including a list of resources for anyone who would like to learn more. I hope that the Ohio Department of Health will include resources such as these in the materials they develop.

- Breakthrough T1D [Newly Diagnosed](#) resources (formerly known as JDRF, local chapters can pair families with a mentor)
- [Breakthrough T1D Bag of Hope](#) (available for all ages, including adults)
- Beyond Type 1 [What is Type 1 Diabetes](#)
- Beyond Type 1 [Newly Diagnosed](#)
- American Diabetes Association's [Safe at School resources](#)
- [Children with Medical Handicaps program resources](#) (currently expanding to age 26, thank you!)
- [The Embrace Foundation](#) (help with supplies)

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support and suggest this change.

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