



#### **Ashland**

9th Street Dental  
567-217-7040  
Ashland Health &  
Wellness Center  
567-217-7778

#### **Bucyrus**

Bucyrus Health &  
Wellness Center  
419-834-8889

Community Counseling -  
Bucyrus  
419-562-2000

#### **Mansfield**

Cornerstone OB/GYN  
419-522-6800

Five Points Primary Care  
419-522-2239

Malabar Care Connect  
567-309-7333

Mansfield Family Health  
419-525-6737

Third Street Family  
Health Services  
419-522-6191

#### **Marion**

Marion Area Counseling  
740-387-5210

#### **Shelby**

Shelby Health &  
Wellness Center  
419-525-6795

## **Third Street Family Health Services Senate Medicaid Committee Testimony on Substitute House Bill 96 May 6, 2025**

Chairman Romanchuk, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Liston and Members of the Senate Medicaid Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Substitute House Bill 96, state operating budget. My name is Peggy Anderson, and I am CEO of Third Street Family Health Services.

Third Street has offices in Ashland, Crawford, Marion, and Richland counties with our largest location in Mansfield, Ohio. We have 10 clinical sites and provide primary care, mental health and psychiatry services, dental care, podiatry, women's health services, substance use treatment, community health worker support, and school-based health services. In 2024, we served over 24,000 patients through over 109,000 patient visits.

I would like to commend Governor DeWine and the Ohio House of Representatives for prioritizing the health and well-being of Ohioans through their investments in critical health initiatives. There are several provisions in Sub HB 96 that Community Health Centers (CHCs) strongly support, including:

- Funding for School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs),
- The Ohio Primary Care Workforce Initiative (OPCWI),
- Investments in dental and vision care for children in underserved areas.

Third Street and our communities benefitted specifically from the School-Based Health funding. Using those dollars, we expanded our behavioral health and community health workers to two additional schools within our service area. This expansion of services is timely as the Mansfield City Schools are in the middle of significant cuts to their staffing thus leaving gaps that our behavioral health team and community health workers can help fill for the most at-risk students. We built a strong alliance with the school system to best serve the needs of children and families.

These investments directly align with the mission of Community Health Centers: expanding access to comprehensive, quality, and affordable health care across Ohio. I respectfully ask that you refer to testimony submitted by the Ohio Association of Community Health Centers (OACHC) for full remarks and additional considerations, including strong support for protecting the 340B Drug Pricing Program.

Today, I will focus my testimony on two key areas in HB 96: the Ohio Primary Care Workforce Initiative (OPCWI) and Medicaid Group VIII Trigger.

Like many industries, health care faces significant workforce shortages that impact our ability to meet community needs. In the last several years, Third Street has experienced significant provider turnover and even higher turnover for our hourly positions. Provider turnover specifically results in longer wait times, temporary



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Our Mental Health Services are supported by The Alcohol, Drug Addiction,  
and Mental Health Board of Crawford and Marion Counties.

office closures to give us time to recruit, and significantly lower revenues than needed to remain financially sustainable long term. Our hourly staff shortage results in inefficiencies, staff and patient frustrations, and additional resources to continually retrain new hires.

To address these challenges, Third Street participates in the Ohio Primary Care Workforce Initiative, the state's only pipeline program dedicated to expanding the primary care workforce in underserved communities.

While we are grateful for the Governor and House's continued support through level funding of \$5.4 million over the biennium, we respectfully request the Senate to increase OPCWI funding to \$7 million. This increase would support expanded teaching and precepting opportunities for students and allow additional workforce development initiatives. It will also be the first increase since the original allocation.

The Ohio Primary Care Workforce program has operated successfully for over a decade without a funding increase, despite rising costs and workforce demand. The program encourages providers to stay in Ohio and ideally serve in an under resourced area.

Through our work with the workforce program, we hired 25 students, 3 dentists and 22 nurse practitioners. We also precepted 313 students, the majority of which were through the OHIO Project at The Ohio State University. This program is central to our recruiting efforts and for the recruiting strategies of many health centers.

An increase now is an investment to strengthen Ohio's future healthcare workforce and improve access to care statewide.

Secondly, we are concerned about the language requiring immediate termination of Medicaid coverage for Group VIII members if the federal medical assistance percentage (FMAP) falls below 90%. Medicaid expansion is vital not only for individual health outcomes but also for the operational stability of Community Health Centers like ours.

Prior to Medicaid Expansion, Third Street saw a 32% uninsured rate. Our team actively works to get our uninsured patients on either insurance or Medicaid based on their eligibility and only 9% of our patients are uninsured. If we were to increase our uninsured 10 or 20%, we would lose between \$750,000-1,500,000 in net revenue for the organization. Third Street would need to close either a couple of sites or reduce our service lines such as substance use treatment or dental care if we were to lose that amount of net revenue.

We respectfully urge the removal—or at minimum, the revision—of this provision to avoid disrupting essential care for vulnerable Ohioans and threatening the sustainability of CHCs across the state.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these critical issues. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.