

May 12, 2025

RE: House Bill 96

Chairman Romanchuk, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the Senate Medicaid Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on House Bill 96. My name is Dr. Robert Pema and I have been implanting vagal nerve stimulators for the treatment of drug resistant epilepsy since 2002. I have implanted over 700 patients in my practice, and am the 6<sup>th</sup> highest implanting surgeon in the United States.

In my 23 years of implanting VNS, I have seen tremendous success with control of seizures. How I know this is that I am also changing the batteries on my original implanted patients and when questioned about success, nearly all have had success, some stating that they feel they have regained control of their lives. It is very fulfilling as a physician to hear such success stories from patient and makes me more committed to helping patients get VNS.

VNS therapy is a wonderful alternative for treatment resistant epilepsy and should be made more accessible to Medicaid patients in Ohio. I only wish I was there to testify in person.

Thank you.

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