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**PETER J. STAUTBERG**  
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**House Bill 552**  
**Sponsor Testimony**  
**Senate Medicaid, Health, and Human Services Committee**  
**Representative Peter J. Stautberg**

**December 3, 2014**

Chairman Jones, Vice Chair Burke, Ranking Member Cafaro, and members of the Senate Medicaid, Health and Human Services Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 552.

This legislation is very straightforward and simple. It will require the Ohio Department of Health to create an information sheet for medical facilities and medical professionals to provide informational resources to parents who receive a test result or prenatal or postnatal diagnosis indicating Down syndrome.

I would suspect everyone here is familiar with Down syndrome, all to varying degrees. But unless you have a child with Down syndrome, you probably would not know where to go to find information, resources, and support groups to help understand and expect the changes in your life as a parent. Down syndrome is not usually something a family plans for when they find out that they are expecting. However, the parents of children with Down syndrome will tell you that although there are challenges that come with raising a child with Down syndrome, these are wonderful and precious children and there are numerous wonderful and joyous occasions that come with raising any child.

The parents of children with Down syndrome will also tell you, however, that far too often there is a lack of information provided when a diagnosis of Down syndrome is received. Expectant parents are frequently not provided any information to help them prepare for having a child with Down syndrome. Anecdotally, some medical professionals have offered condolences or have been at a loss in answering questions or providing any guidance on what to expect with their newborn.

This bill would create an information sheet through the Ohio Department of Health, which would include a detailed description of Down syndrome (its causes, effects on development, potential complications, etc.), diagnostic tests, treatment and therapeutic options, and contact information for local, state, and national organizations that provide Down syndrome educational and support services and programs. This information sheet would be provided to expectant parents who receive a test result or a

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prenatal or postnatal diagnosis indicating Down syndrome, and this information shall also be available on the Department of Health's website.

Research shows that families are more resilient and able to thrive if able to access individual, family, and community resources. This legislation would help to accomplish a new level of accessibility and help these expectant families gain a familiarity with Down syndrome.

This bill is modeled after legislation passed by Kentucky a little more than a year ago.

Once again, I would like to thank the Chair, Vice Chair, Ranking Member, and the Senate Medicaid, Health, and Human Services Committee for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 552. I am glad to answer any questions the committee may have at this time.

