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Chairman Coley, Vice-chair Seitz, ranking member Yuko, and distinguished members of the Government Oversight and Reform committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today on Senate Bill 214.

I used to work at Planned Parenthood. I am a Nationally Certified Sexuality Educator, a member of the American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors and Therapists (AASECT) and now I am a professor of Human Sexuality at Miami University.

I grew up in rural North Eastern Ohio. I attended high school at Sandy Valley, got my undergraduate degree at Marietta College and received a PhD in Educational Sociology at the University of Cincinnati.

I have worked on all sides of sexual health education. I spent nearly a decade as an AASECT certified educator. I spent that time working in the field as an educator in schools and homeless shelters. I also worked on the clinical side. Now I teach and do research around Human Sexuality.

I am concerned this bill seems to be public policy that is not based on scientific research. It actually does the exact opposite of what research tells us to do to ensure that all families have access to the health care services they need. Research tells us that people need more access to reproductive healthcare, not less. As a researcher, this is unethical.

I am also concerned about the results in the community. Planned Parenthood is the largest provider for women, men and teens in terms of reproductive healthcare. They get many referrals because people who do not have money or are without insurance still need to see a provider.

Planned Parenthood is one of the few places teens can go to get education, learn about preventing STIs and pregnancy, and be in judgment-free environment.

Ohio doesn't require sexual health education and gives a lot of money to abstinence only education. So many young people get misinformation around STI and pregnancy, which are preventable problems. Because of this we need to be giving them the solutions. Healthcare is a human right.

One of the first patients I worked with in the clinical setting, was a young man in school who had been sexually assaulted. He hadn't told anybody for 2-3 months. He came to Planned Parenthood because he had symptoms of a Sexually Transmitted Infection and was in pain. Men who have been sexually assaulted underreport and are underserved. This young man was in crisis. He contracted an STI from this rape. He told me "There was no where else I could have gone." He was on his parents' insurance and couldn't go someplace where he'd be billed. He used the Planned Parenthood sliding scale. We treated his STI, gave him education, and then he talked to a social worker and got a referral for counseling. He got this comprehensive health care in a supportive environment that cares about the whole person. Planned Parenthood helps people with problems that are very personal. We were prepared and trained to handle all these situations.

I have also visited Planned Parenthood as a patient. If they hadn't been around in the late 90s, I would not have options for reproductive health care. There is nowhere else patients can go that offers all of the services that Planned Parenthood offers. Without Planned Parenthood, patients would need to wait longer and piece meal together their health care from different community health centers.

Don't let politics get in the way of good healthcare. 1 in 3 pregnancies in Ohio are unplanned. We've seen various outbreaks of STIs, there's even one happening right now in NE Ohio, an outbreak of syphilis. We know that abstinence only education increases the chances of getting STIs and pregnancies, as opposed to medically accurate sex education.