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80th District

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Chair

Joint Medicaid Oversight
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Chairman Burke, Vice-Chair Beagle, Ranking Member Tavares and members of the Senate Health, Human Services, and Medicaid Committee: thank you for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 252, which would designate January as “Blood Donor Awareness Month” in Ohio.

I decided to sponsor this legislation partly based upon my own experiences: As a physician, I regularly order blood products for patients and witness first-hand how blood transfusions can save lives. As a regular blood donor at the Community Blood Center in Dayton, I see people of all ages, races, and backgrounds give their blood in a unifying act of life-giving charity. As a parent, I was able to donate my own blood to my newborn son when he needed it as a premature baby 19 years ago.

According to the American Red Cross, approximately 36,000 units of red blood cells are needed every day in the U.S, with someone needing blood every two seconds¹. Donated blood is used to save the lives of millions of individuals every year. From victims of car accidents to cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy, blood transfusions are critical procedures for survival and could not be accomplished without blood donations.

Like many advantages in our modern world, it is easy to take the availability of blood for granted. An American Red Cross study shows that an estimated 38 percent of the U.S. population is eligible to give blood, however less than 10 percent of that group chooses to give every year². That is why it is important for us to recognize blood donors and raise awareness for the lives that can be saved by simply taking an hour out of your day to donate blood. The need for blood donations is ever-present and it is my hope that House bill 252 will help draw further attention to that need and inspire everyone to donate blood and save a life.

Chairman Burke and members of the Health, Human Services, and Medicaid Committee, I thank you for your consideration of this legislation and would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.

¹ <http://www.redcrossblood.org/learn-about-blood/blood-facts-and-statistics>

² *ibid*

