
Prevention Action Alliance

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Ohio Senate Senate Health, Human Services & Medicaid Prevention Action Alliance June 9, 2020

Good morning, Chairman Burke, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Health, Human Services, & Medicaid Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony in consideration of Senate Concurrent Resolution 14 (“SCR 14”). My name is Jean-Philippe Dorval, and I am the Manager of Legislative Affairs and Administrative Services for Prevention Action Alliance (PAA). PAA is a 32-year-old statewide nonprofit organization based in Columbus, Ohio. We are dedicated to leading healthy communities in the prevention of substance misuse and the promotion of mental health wellness. PAA offers a wealth of resources, training services, grants, and advocacy opportunities for those who are active in the prevention and mental health fields.

I would like to start off by thanking Senator Craig and Senator Williams for leading the introduction of this bill in the Senate and would also like to thank Representative Howse and Representative Crawley for their sponsorship of the companion legislation, House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) 31, in the House. As a member of the behavioral health community, and being a Black man in America, this resolution hits home.

For too long this nation has allowed racism, and the multigenerational trauma it causes in communities of color, to persist. As a result, we are now seeing a worldwide call for 400 years of that trauma, mistreatment, and abuse to end. Racism, and the damage it has created, has wreaked havoc on communities of color, specifically the Black community, and we’re here to ask that we start the reconciliation process in Ohio. It will take all of us fighting for change in our organizations, our businesses, our government, and our personal lives to break down the multifaceted systems of oppression that run deep within the fabric of this nation.

SCR 14 is an important step in that fight, and we are proud, as a statewide organization, to support it.

Cultural diversity, competence, and humility is a foundational component to effective and impactful prevention services. That component cannot be fully realized while certain members of our communities are purposefully harmed by racism, oppression, and violence.

Today on behalf of my organization I pledge that we will do our part to fight any and all racial injustices within the prevention field and will also serve as a statewide leader in the fight for the equitable health outcomes for our communities of color. We at Prevention Action Alliance believe that everyone has a role in prevention, and today we strengthen that statement by claiming that everyone has a role in combating racism and discrimination. Prevention Action Alliance will use its platforms to promote love, change, equality, equity, and unity and we ask our partners throughout the state do the same.

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Thank you again for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony in consideration of SCR 14. I am happy to answer any questions the committee may have.