

YWCA IS ON A MISSION

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Ohio House Families, Aging & Human Services Committee
HB 254 Proponent Testimony
June 24, 2021**

Chair Manchester, Vice Chair Cutrona, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the House Families, Aging & Human Services Committee – thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 254, which would establish domestic violence fatality review boards throughout the state.

YWCA Dayton provides 24/7, year-round shelter and supportive services for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and other forms of intimate-partner and gender- based violence. In 2020, YWCA Dayton’s domestic violence services sheltered 264 women and children; provided 22,654 nights of stay in shelter; answered 5,558 crisis calls; and provided more than 16,000 hours of advocacy, counseling, and crisis support.

One of the most important parts of our mission is violence prevention. We know how to help women who have overcome domestic violence, but our ultimate goal is to prevent it from happening in the first place. This bill would provide a tool to help us reach that goal.

Per the sponsors of this bill, it would:

- promote continued communication between all groups, professions, agencies, or entities engaged in the prevention and education of domestic violence
- maintain databases of the domestic violence fatalities to understand the causes and incidence of those deaths
- develop plans for implementing local service and program changes to the groups, professions, agencies, or entities that serve residents that might prevent deaths by domestic violence
- provide the Department of Health with aggregate data, trends, and patterns concerning domestic violence fatalities

The information provided by these databases and plans will help to encourage dialogue between many entities that will result in better communication, sharing of research and ideas, and ultimately procedures that could result in better outcomes. We are fully supportive of any resources that could reduce or eliminate the number of domestic violence homicides in Ohio.

In alignment with our mission, YWCA Dayton thus requests that you support the passage of House Bill 254 in support of our organization’s service population and women throughout the state. Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions you have. We are always available to serve as a resource.