



To: Members of the Ohio House Health Committee

Fr: Joe Rosato, Director of Government Relations, Ohio State Medical Association

Da: February 9, 2021

Re: HB 9 – Dextromethorphan Sales

---

On behalf of the Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA), the state's oldest and largest professional organization representing Ohio physicians, medical residents, and medical students, we write in support of House Bill 9.

This legislation would prohibit the sale of dextromethorphan without a prescription to any individual under the age of 18. An emerging trend of abuse of dextromethorphan, the active ingredient in cough syrup, by youth has caught the attention of many health care professionals. Our OSMA physician members, particularly those who receive young patients in emergency departments, have treated such patients. When ingested in high dosages, patients may experience alarming symptoms such as dizziness, double or blurred vision, slurred speech, confusion, loss of physical coordination, vomiting, or rapid heartbeat and may require emergency medical attention.

House Bill 9 limits access to this medication by children. Those children and teenagers who need this medication for medical reasons will still have two avenues by which to receive it: either through presenting a valid prescription at the time of purchase, or by having their parent or legal guardian purchase it for them. This small measure can go a long way in preventing youth under the age of 18 from easily obtaining large quantities of dextromethorphan with the intention to abuse it. At least 20 other states in the U.S. have passed similar legislation to protect their children, and the OSMA supports HB 9 in order to add Ohio to that list of states.

As always, the OSMA appreciates the opportunity to be meaningful contributors to the legislative process. Please contact us with any questions you may have.