

“Good morning Chair Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, and members of the Ohio House Health Committee.

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Ashley Fessel. I am the mother of a 10 year old with Autism. I support strongly House Bill 60.

My son is a very happy child. However, there are days where his symptoms can show their ugly faces. For example, my son may suddenly become very irritable, extremely hyper, or his ODD is at it's ceiling. He is very verbal, but sometimes these overwhelming feelings, hinder him from telling us what he needs. Most doctors just want to push prescription pills on him. We have had a Gene Site test performed on our son. This test determined there are 3 medicines in the world he can take for his Autism. Two of those cause extreme anger, and the other loss of appetite. So, on top of those pills, we would have to then be prescribed another set to counteract those side effects. But, those pills will all likely cause liver damage, so we get to be prescribed yet another round of pills to control that. On top of all of that, we must have bloodwork done to determine if we haven't damaged his liver. A blood test, of which a needle is stuck into the arm of someone small, with sensory issues. At 6 years old the one blood test we successfully completed, required 2 security guards that were very physically fit to hold down my screaming son. He went into fight mode, and blacked out from his anxiety. The guards were dripping in sweat. My son was traumatized.

Have any of you read the lifespan of someone on the spectrum that is pumped full of the "fix pills"? A recent study shows the life expectancy for individuals with autism can be 10 to 30 years less than those without it. We, as parents, have to live with the fact that we are slowly killing our children. Have any of you studied the success of Cannabis in states that allow it for the spectrum? I'm sure you have. After reading the success, how can any of you decide that it shouldn't be a qualifying condition? Because there are too many profiting from their relationship with the pharmaceutical companies? The selfish gain in this state is slowly killing individuals that have amazing intellectual abilities. My son is 10, and taught himself in 2 hours how to read, speak, and write the Greek alphabet, and the next day the Russian. 2 hours!!! They are amazing. We allow adults to sit in bars and get drunk, cause fights, and unfortunately cause fetal accidents. That's okay, but something that just mellows a person's nervous system isn't?

You are all very educated, and trusted individuals. Show this country, this state, that you can help these individuals function and contribute to society. Help parents sleep better at night, knowing they will have those extra 10-30 years with their children.

I ask you to please consider my testimony and vote YES on this important legislation. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

I welcome any questions the committee has.”