

March 30, 2022

Chairman Brinkman, Vice-Chair Lampton, Ranking Member Miranda and members of the House Insurance Committee, thank you for considering my testimony today on House Bill 448 - Prescription Drug Readers for Visually Impaired Patients.

I am here today to testify in support of H.B. 448. Currently, blind Ohioans do not have easy access to prescription label information in accessible formats. This means that blind Ohioans often either have to rely on friends and family to read prescription information or to simply go without being able to obtain the information on prescription labels. This means that blind Ohioans do not have access to dosage information, or even medication safety information.

As a blind person with residual vision, what many would label as visually impaired, I have personally experienced these difficulties. Despite having vision, labels on prescriptions are often difficult to read because of their small print. In my case, I take two eyedrops for glaucoma. The warning labels for these drops is so extensive that it is provided via a package insert. I have brought one today here to show as an example. The print on this label is so small there is no way I can read it without significant magnification. So I went years not knowing the potential side affects of the drops I take. I also went years without knowing whether there were any warnings regarding storage of my drops, only to later discover that one drop is supposed to be stored in the refrigerator. This is information that could have impacted my health and that I would have had access to with accessible labels.

With today's technology, accessible labels can be provided easily and inexpensively via large print, audio labels, or in braille. Unfortunately, to date I have never had access to an accessible prescription label for my eye drops. I believe that H.B. 448 would enhance my, and all blind Ohioans health and safety by requiring all pharmacies to provide accessible prescription labels.

Consequently, I respectfully call upon the House Insurance Committee to protect the health and safety of all blind Ohioans by passing H.B. 448.