



March 12, 2021

Jeff Neidig, RPh  
Owner, Medi-Wise Pharmacy  
245 W. State Street, Newcomerstown, OH 43832

Chair Huffman, Vice-Chair Antani, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Health Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 9.

HB 9 will prohibit young persons, under the age of 18, from purchasing products that contain dextromethorphan (DXM). DXM is a common ingredient in over-the-counter cough and cold products. It is a non-addictive cough suppressant and, if used appropriately, is quite safe. However, in recent years it has become a popular drug of abuse, increasingly abused by adolescents and young adults to get high.

My name is Jeff Neidig, a pharmacist and independent pharmacy owner in Newcomerstown, Ohio. I also serve on the Steering Committee for the Tuscarawas County Anti-Drug Coalition, and our mission is to prevent youth substance use and addiction. I am also the chair of the coalitions Prescription Drug Committee. Our committee's focus is on the safe use, safe storage, and safe disposal of medicines. Our committee reviewed this proposed legislation regarding the sale of over-the-counter (OTC) products containing DXM. We would like to submit our written testimony in support of this bill, as we see a great benefit to reducing potential misuse of legitimate drugs, which can have a lasting effect on the youth population in our state. We have found that the youth may misuse OTC/nonprescription medicine because they think that it is safe. Parents may also be misled to believe that OTC medicines pose no harm to their children and let them purchase, store, and use these medicines without supervision. While OTC medicines are an important first line of treatment, including self-treatment, we know that even OTC medicines can be misused, even if not to get a "high" from their use. For example, our youth may use OTC pain and fever medicines to treat minor sports injuries and decide that two or three pills are better than the one that is recommended. This medication use pattern could lead to a misconception with stronger and more dangerous prescription drug use in their future and additional and deadly misuse potential. When this bill becomes law, we will use its message along with our planned OTC medicine safety initiatives, to inform our county youth and parents about good, safe medicine use.

For these reasons, we would like you to support HB 9, as it is good policy. It will help prevent DXM abuse of young people in Ohio and help us inform and educate our communities on the importance of OTC medication safety. Thanks you for your consideration on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Jeff Neidig  
Owner, Medi-Wise Pharmacy  
Tuscarawas County Anti-Drug Coalition  
[jeffneidig@mediwisepharmacy.com](mailto:jeffneidig@mediwisepharmacy.com)