

Testimony of Kyle Hoylman, President, American Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists (AARST)

In support of H.B. 106: Designate January as Radon Awareness Month

Before the Ohio Senate Health Committee

May 24, 2021

Chairman Stephen A. Huffman, Vice Chair Niraj Antani, Ranking Minority Member Nickie J. Antonio, and Distinguished Committee Members:

My name is Kyle Hoylman. I am President of the American Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists. I lost my father, a non-smoker, to lung cancer in 2009. I am also a cancer survivor. I grew up in Chillicothe, Ohio, living in a home that contained levels of radon that measured more than 7 times the EPA action level, or the radiation dose equivalent of approximately 1,450 chest x-rays per year.

The purpose of my written testimony is to request that members of this committee support H.B. 106, which simply seeks to bring greater awareness to the importance of understanding the health risks associated with radon by designating January as Radon Awareness Month in Ohio.

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that is colorless, odorless, and tasteless. A form of ionizing radiation, radon is a Class A Human Carcinogen. Radon enters buildings through cracks and other pathways, where it can accumulate in dangerous levels. Exposure to radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers, second overall only to smoking. As much as 15% of all lung cancer deaths are attributed to radon. In the United States, more than 21,000 annual deaths are caused by radon – approximately 1,125 of those deaths occur in Ohio. Every 25 minutes, radon claims another innocent victim. More buildings are built without radon control features than are mitigated each year and effective testing, notification, and disclosure policies are not in place to alert building occupants when elevated radon levels exist. As a

result, more people live, work, and learn in buildings containing toxic levels of radon than ever before. Coupled with the use of medical procedures and tests that utilize radiation increasing significantly, the importance of reducing exposure to radon is an important component in preventing cancer. Comparative human health-based risk assessments performed by the U.S. EPA and numerous state agencies have consistently ranked radon among the most important environmental health risks facing our nation. Moreover, a Harvard Center for Risk Analysis study ranked radon the number one health risk in the home.

Support for increasing awareness of the health risks associated with radon is an important component in preventing mortality attributable to radon-induced lung cancer. Until greater awareness exists, Ohioans will continue to die from a disease that is largely preventable. Thank you for your consideration in support of this important bill.

Healthy Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Kyle S. Hoffman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "K".