

September 13, 2021

Proponent: SB 151, Emery and Elliot's Law

I am writing to strongly support EMERY AND ELLIOT'S LAW, SB #151.

A patient who is critically ill faces life threatening or potentially disabling events that require the physician to immediately decide to begin life-sustaining interventions. Some physicians and hospitals refuse to provide these interventions for premature babies. Parents and guardians must be guaranteed the right to know hospital and physician policies concerning initiation of life-sustaining treatment for their newly born, critically ill premature baby. These policies must be written.

Hospitals and physicians must be obligated to inform parents of any policies that might jeopardize initiation of life-sustaining interventions. Hospitals and physicians already are required to inform patients of advanced directive procedures. It is critical that they also be required to inform parents and guardians of policies that could deny life-sustaining care for critically ill premature babies born less than 24 weeks.

The birth of an extremely premature baby is a life-threatening situation, and parents have the right to expect that immediate life-sustaining interventions will be provided. The clinical situation evolves and the prognosis of recovery becomes clear. The physician and the parents or guardians continually share information and decisions are made collaboratively as the clinical situation evolves. At some point, this shared decision making might determine that further life-sustaining interventions would be futile.

Medical decisions must be transparent. SB 151 will ensure that all premature babies born in the State of Ohio are provided life-sustaining interventions to meet their critical care needs.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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