

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Health Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Olivia Ballard. I am a Registered Nurse and a current Doctoral Nurse Anesthesia student at Otterbein University. I strongly support Senate Bill 161, the surgical smoke evacuation bill.

I am in my final year of Nurse Anesthesia school and have experienced surgical smoke first-hand. I have been exposed to the smoke plume during my clinical training days in the OR. My Doctorate Project focus is on surgical smoke evacuation practices at our training institution as well. The literature explains the harmful effects of surgical smoke, how often we contact it, and ways to increase smoke evacuation methods; all of which provide evidence of the need for change. The facility has taken the necessary steps of action to prepare for this hopeful alteration in course. To help facilitate this, I completed an organizational assessment as the initial step of a systematic process to improve smoke exposure reduction behaviors in clinical practice for those healthcare members in the OR within this institution.

After learning about surgical smoke and experiencing it during observational audits and clinical, I became passionate about creating a safer atmosphere. The quality of my day was much better when surgeries had smoke evacuation. Perioperative nurses are concerned about exposure and health effects from the smoke plume, as am I. The majority of OR personnel are eager to maintain smoke evacuation practices and improve the gap in knowledge about the topic. I now understand why it's so essential for the current smoke evacuation recommendations and policies to become a law in the state of Ohio. My project is ongoing, and I look forward to helping implement evidence-based recommendations based off of the literature and my findings. Perioperative team members and patients deserve a smoke-free OR, and by passing SB161, we are one step closer to that.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote YES on this bill that deals with patient and workplace safety. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill. I will now take any questions you may have.

Respectfully Yours,

Olivia Ballard