

## **29<sup>TH</sup> HOUSE DISTRICT**

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HARRISON, AND COLERAIN, CROSBY,  
HARRISON, MIAMI, AND WHITEWATER  
TOWNSHIPS

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## **State Representative Cindy Abrams Ohio House of Representatives**

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Antonio and Members of the Senate Health Committee – thank you for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony on HB 537. This bill would designate February 12th as Cholangiocarcinoma Awareness Day.

As we commonly hear, “there is no routine cancer.” Cholangiocarcinoma is a bile duct cancer for which no cure has been identified. As shared in testimony provided in committee, bile duct cancer is the second most common primary liver cancer in the world – yet cholangiocarcinoma is often misdiagnosed. This is likely because the symptoms of this disease mimic other medical conditions – such as fatigue, weight loss, night sweats, jaundice, and abdominal pain.

Cholangiocarcinoma is rare, with only 10,000 individuals being diagnosed each year. Due to the cancer’s limited occurrence, it is often not diagnosed until it has metastasized and in the late stages, making effective treatment difficult.

Diagnosing Cholangiocarcinoma is similar to the diagnostic process for other cancers. Often, doctors will utilize CT scans, MRIs, ultrasounds, tumor marker tests, and blood tests to assess the type of mass that has formed and to determine the stage of the cancer.

Since introducing this bill, the US FDA has accepted priority review for a new drug called futibatinib for patients with previously treated locally advanced or metastatic cholangiocarcinoma. The developers of this drug believe futibatinib could present the opportunity for targeted treatment for these patients who have so few options.

I’m sure we all have a personal story. We’ve all had a loved one, or ourselves, experience a devastating cancer diagnosis. We’ve all had to watch them face the unknown, trusting medical experts to guide them. I come to you with this bill on behalf of my dear friend and former colleague Lt. Steve Wilger.

I firmly believe that bringing awareness to this devastating cancer will not only help to support research efforts, but will create an outlet for patients and their loved ones. I hope this bill allows them the opportunity to feel heard, understood, and valued. Every attempt to amplify advocacy and promote education tells these patients that they matter.

February is already widely recognized as Cholangiocarcinoma Awareness Month. Designating February 12<sup>th</sup> as Cholangiocarcinoma Awareness Day is a simple next step to shed light on this rare and deadly illness.

Once again, Chairman Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on House Bill 537. I will now stand for questions.