



State Senator Tina Maharath
Ohio's 3rd Senate District

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Ohio's 19th Senate District

Sponsor Testimony
Senate Bill 174
Senate Transportation Committee
Wednesday, October 6, 2021

Good afternoon Chairwoman Kunze, Vice Chair Reineke, and members of the Transportation Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present Senate Bill 174.

SB 174 will create the “On Our Sleeves” specialty license plate. “On Our Sleeves” was launched on World Mental Health Day in 2018 by Nationwide Children’s Hospital. Its mission is to provide every community in America with access to free, educational resources necessary for breaking stigmas about child mental health and to educate families and advocates.

The premise of “On Our Sleeves” certainly rings true. Children are unlikely to share their struggles with mental health on their sleeves and to reach out for help. And the numbers are alarming:

- One in five children is living with a mental health disorder, and less than half get the treatment they need.
- Just one child psychiatrist is available for every 15,000 kids who need their help.
- Fifty percent of mental health disorders that last a lifetime become present before the age of 14.
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death among persons aged 15 to 25.

Numerous education, corporate and healthcare partners are stepping up to break the stigma around children’s mental health. Since its launch, the “On Our Sleeves” campaign has reached more than 2 million people with free educational resources. Through its Million Classroom Project, the campaign is seeking to provide helpful classroom activities and resources to educators in order to boost the mental wellness of students in all grade levels.

The COVID-19 pandemic has only increased the need to improve awareness of mental illness amongst children, and the creation of this specialty license plate is one way that Ohio can contribute to this important endeavor.

A twenty dollar contribution fee will be collected in the purchase of “On Our Sleeves” license plates, along with a ten dollar administrative fee.

Chairwoman Kunze and members of the Committee, we appreciate your attention and we respectfully request your favorable consideration and passage of Senate Bill 174.