



Testimony of

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February 20, 2010

Before the Ohio House Finance Committee

Chairman Smith, Vice Chair Ryan, Ranking Member Cera, and members of the House Finance Committee, on behalf of University Hospitals Conneaut Medical Center and University Hospitals Geneva Medical Center, our physicians, nurses and employees, and more importantly, the community we serve, I am pleased to submit this testimony for the record. Specifically, I write in support of House Bill 378, legislation to regarding provision of broadband internet services.

My name is Jason Glowczewski, and I am the Chief Operating Officer at University Hospitals Conneaut Medical Center and University Hospitals Geneva Medical Center (UH Conneaut and UH Geneva). UH Conneaut and UH Geneva are part of the University Hospitals System, a Cleveland, Ohio-based super-regional health system that serves more than 1 million patients in 15 Northeast Ohio counties. The hub of our 18-hospital system is University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center, of which UH Conneaut and UH Geneva are a significant part.

UH Conneaut and UH Geneva are each critical access hospitals with 25 inpatient beds and are designated as Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) 5 star hospitals, putting them in the top 10% of the nation for quality. Serving a highly rural patient population, UH Conneaut and UH Geneva are well positioned to improve patient care as residents gain access to broadband internet services.

HB 378 would create the Ohio Broadband Development Grant Program, a program designed to encourage the expansion of broadband technology to unserved areas in the state like Ashtabula County. I am supportive of these efforts because of the positive impact it can have on how we treat and deliver care to our patients. For example, telehealth services, or virtual visits conducted over video conferencing can allow for real-time interaction between patients and health care providers for a variety of conditions. This has potential to reduce unnecessary emergency room visits, and maintain better care in the community – especially for residents that have limited access to healthcare due to distance or their ability to drive. Patients could also get online second

opinions. They could get direct access to UH physicians without leaving the comfort and privacy of their home.

Reliable access to broadband internet technology could also revolutionize the ability to remotely monitor patients in the home setting. The UH Home Care team could use tele-monitoring equipment in the patient's home to measure vital signs like blood pressure, oxygen levels, blood glucose levels and weight. That information would then be transmitted to the health care provider. The goal is earlier detection and intervention for chronic diseases that are costly to treat, such as congestive heart failure, high blood pressure, and diabetes.

These examples are only the beginning. Telehealth services will continue to grow and Ashtabula County residents without reliable broadband access will be at a disadvantage for accessing innovative services that can help improve their health. For the State of Ohio, improved access to broadband may allow for lower health care costs due to more Ohioans having access to preventative services. Wellness and prevention is certainly our goal, but there are key drivers for continued innovation. Broadband internet access is one of those key drivers.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony to the Committee, and respectfully request you support House Bill 378.