

To: Members of the Ohio House Health Committee

Fr: Tim Maglione, JD, Senior Director, Ohio State Medical Association
Monica Hueckel, Director, Ohio State Medical Association

Da: March 21, 2017

Re: HB 73 – Revise drug laws

On behalf of the 16,000 physician, resident and medical student members of the Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA), our organization **is writing in support of House Bill 73.**

As you know, House Bill 73 would prohibit selling dextromethorphan without a prescription to any individual under the age of 18. An emerging trend of abuse of dextromethorphan, or the active ingredient in cough syrup, by youth has caught the attention of many health care professionals. OSMA physician members, particularly those who receive young patients in emergency departments, have treated such patients. When ingested in high dosages, patients may experience alarming symptoms such as dizziness, double or blurred vision, slurred speech, confusion, loss of physical coordination, vomiting, or rapid heartbeat and require emergency medical attention.

The OSMA supports House Bill 73 because it limits access to this medication by children, but those children and teenagers who need this medication for medical reasons still have two avenues by which to receive it – either through presenting a valid prescription at the time of purchase or by having their parent or legal guardian purchase it for them. This small measure can go a long way in preventing youth under the age of 18 from easily obtaining large quantities of dextromethorphan with the intention to abuse it. Twelve other states in the U.S. have passed similar legislation to protect their children, and the OSMA commends the sponsors for bringing HB 73 to the Legislature to add Ohio to that list of states.

The OSMA appreciates the opportunity to be meaningful contributors to the legislative process. Please contact us with any questions you may have.