

Ohio House of Representatives



TO: House State and Local Government Committee Members
FROM: Rep. Ron Young
DATE: February 06, 2018
RE: Sponsor Testimony – *HR 299*

Madam-Chair Anielski, Vice-Chair Hambley, Ranking Member Holmes, members of the House State and Local Government Committee. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Resolution 299.

Three months ago, the President officially declared the opioid crisis “a National Emergency.” This emergency has its roots right here in the great state of Ohio. Every year since 1999 we have lost the war on drugs. In 2016 alone we lost over 60,000 to accidental opioid overdoses, well over 4000 of those were in Ohio.

Nationwide that is more in one year than the total number of lives lost during the whole 20 year Vietnam War! While state funded efforts have saved many, Ohio is by any measure losing this battle. The money spent helping these people have increased dramatically and yet every year the number of Ohioans killed in this war has still increased significantly. We cannot afford to lose a whole generation of Ohioans.

I have recently been introduced to several faith-based groups around the state and have heard the testimonies and seen the impact of how they have helped the addicted. I have been inspired by the success that they have seen. I believe they need to be part of the discussion as they are indeed part of the solution. To that end, I would like to support their efforts in any way possible.

House Resolution 299 is simply a statement from this Esteemed Chamber that tells the public that we recognize just how big of a deal this crisis is, and we need “all hands on deck” including those in the faith-based community. This war will not be won by government efforts alone. Victory will require our appealing to the most powerful forces at our disposal, that being Ohio’s churches and communities. Not by government controlling their activities but by government supplying them with the resources and information they need to fight this battle.

In the weeks to come, I expect that you will hear from several Faith and Community leaders that will confirm the effectiveness of their type of recovery programs.

Thank you Madam Chair for allowing me to provide this testimony on such a crucial issue.