November 19, 2019

Ohio House Health Committee

Proponent Testimony HB 214

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Chair Lipps, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Member west, and Members of the

Ohio House Health Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB214.

In the Spring of 2013 I became gravely ill which led to an extended hospital stay. Upon release from the hospital I was handed thirteen different prescriptions. Being totally blind the idea of managing thirteen different prescriptions was overwhelming. Some of these medications were to be taken only once a day while others were to be taken several times during the day or on alternating days. Some of these medications were to be taken with food, while others were to be taken thirty minutes before eating and some on an empty stomach. Most of the pills took on a similar physical shape and texture., making tactile identification next to impossible. With only print labels I was physically unable to manage my own medications, making me feel like I have been stripped of my independence. Since all documentation regarding the medication was in print it was impossible to manage which medications to take at what time, on what day, and should the medication be taken with food or on an empty stomach.

The only feasible solution was to have a sighted person come to my residence once a week and fill my pill boxes, and they also verified that the refills that were shipped to me were correct. At this point in time I was on Medicaid, as are many visually impaired and blind people, so this expense was extended to the taxpayers of the state of Ohio.

Not only would accessible prescription labels and information save the state of Ohio money, it would also allow those with a print disability to maintain their independence, self dignity and privacy.

I urge the members of this Committee to pass HB 214, allowing for Ohioans with a print disability to manage their own medications with dignity and self-sufficiency.

Respectfully submitted,

James J. Weiss