My name is Lizzie DiVincenzo Chairman Burke, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio, and members Of the Commitee,

and I would like to start off by thanking all of you for this opportunity, and for your time today. Everyone’s lifestyle is built around them, my lifestyle is built around a disease with no cure, but I choose to persevere, and use my experience to help myself and others. I have one goal today and that is to try to make September in Ohio known as Hirschsprung's Disease awareness month. If that goal is not granted, I want you all to have learned something from my speech today. I’d like to start off by taking a minute to share my journey with you. I am 14 years old, and in that time period, I’ve had a total of 6 surgeries, the first was at two days old. I’ve spent countless nights in the hospital, and have undergone many tests. Many people are often unaware of the struggles one may go through, when it’s not visible on the surface. I’m sure everyone in this room right now has something that their going through, but others are unaware and they aren’t able to reach out, simply because they

don’t know about it. Which is why, I believe, that as a community in Ohio, we can spread awareness about Hirschsprung’s disease, and get the message out that everyone is going through something, even if you can’t see it. Together, we can be stronger. Together, we can be aware.