



February 10, 2020

The Honorable Nathan Manning
Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs Committee, Chair
Senate Building, Ground Floor
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chair Manning,

CADCA (Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America) is a national nonprofit whose mission is to “build and strengthen the capacity of community coalitions to create safe, healthy, and drug-free communities globally”. On behalf of the more than 5,000 member coalitions we represent, over 200 of which are in Ohio, I write to express strong support for The State of Ohio HB 29, which would prohibit the sale of over-the-counter (OTC) cough medicine containing the ingredient dextromethorphan to those under the age of 18.

We commend Representative Koehler for introducing the legislation and support his efforts to prevent intentional abuse of dextromethorphan cough medicines. CADCA and its members have been on the front-line addressing prescription drug abuse, including the misuse and abuse of dextromethorphan, for more than 18 years.

When used as directed, dextromethorphan is a safe and effective ingredient found in over 100 OTC cough and cold medicines and used by millions of Americans every year. It has no pain-relieving properties and is not physically addictive. However, the 2019 Monitoring the Future Survey¹ found that approximately 3 percent of teens abuse medicines containing dextromethorphan to get high. When ingested in high dosages, as much as 25 times the recommended amount, side effects can include confusion, dizziness, double or blurred vision, slurred speech, loss of physical coordination, vomiting, and rapid heartbeat.

Age restrictions provide an effective way to limit access to the small teen population likely to abuse cough medicine. Twenty states - including Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Nevada, New Jersey, Michigan, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin - have passed similar legislation, giving parents greater control over the medicines their children have access to. For these reasons, we urge your support for HB 29 to help prevent abuse of dextromethorphan by teens in the Buckeye State. We greatly appreciate your consideration and for bringing additional attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Arthur T. Dean". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Arthur T. Dean

Major General, U.S. Army, Retired
Chairman and CEO

Cc: Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs Committee
The Honorable Kyle Koehler, Ohio House of Representatives

¹ "Monitoring the Future." National Institute on Drug Abuse, 18 Dec. 2019, <https://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/trends-statistics/monitoring-future>.