



DAVE YOST

OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

March 3, 2022

Chairman Jeff LaRe
House Criminal Justice Committee
77 South High St, 13th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman LaRe,

I write today to offer my support for Senate Bill 25, legislation which would take several important steps in the battle against drug addiction across Ohio.

Currently, Ohio's aggravated drug trafficking law allows for two factors which can increase a drug trafficking penalty by a single degree: if the offense is committed near a school or if committed in the vicinity of a juvenile. This well-intentioned law unfortunately fails to protect another vulnerable class – those who are seeking treatment for their addiction.

Senate Bill 25 would primarily enhance penalties for those who are convicted of aggravated drug trafficking within 500 feet of a community addiction service provider. The language enhances a felony by one degree up to a felony of the first degree based on the amount of the drug present. Senate Bill 25 takes a necessary step to aid law enforcement in protecting recovering addicts and their families.

Senate Bill 25 would also prohibit defrauding an alcohol, drug, or urine screening test through the use of synthetic urine, a urine additive, or the urine of another. Current Ohio law does not prohibit defrauding a urine screening test which can lead to an unsafe workplace and other public safety hazards. By criminalizing this offense, Ohio is creating another strong incentive for job seekers and others to get clean and stay clean. Eighteen other states already prohibit the use of synthetic urine, including the neighboring states of Indiana, Michigan, and West Virginia. With the passage of Senate Bill 25, those who decide to use drugs will no longer be able to game the system without consequences.

I commend Senator Theresa Gavarone for her continued leadership on this issue and for bringing Senate Bill 25 before this committee. I am happy to discuss this issue with you or any members of the House Criminal Justice Committee at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dave Yost".

Dave Yost

Ohio Attorney General