



**Dr. Joan Papp**  
**Director of Office Opioid Safety - Emergency Medicine**  
**The MetroHealth System**  
**SB 652 -Proponent Testimony**  
**House Health Committee**  
**November 29, 2022**

Chair Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Liston, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 652 a bill that promotes safer opioid prescribing and patient education.

My name is Dr. Joan Papp and I am the Medical Director of the Office of Opioid Safety at The MetroHealth System. We are the safety-net health system for Cuyahoga County, caring for the most vulnerable members of our community. MetroHealth's more than 7,800 employees provide care at four hospitals, four emergency departments, more than 20 health centers and 40 additional sites throughout Northeast Ohio. In the past year, MetroHealth has served 300,000 patients at more than 1.4 million visits. Seventy-five percent of our patients are uninsured or covered by Medicare or Medicaid.

As outlined in the Bill Analysis – the Bill:

- Requires a pharmacist – when dispensing an opioid analgesic for five or more days – to discuss with the patient the risks of opioid addiction.
- Requires a warning label describing the risks of opioid addiction to be affixed to each container in which an opioid analgesic is dispensed for patient use outside of a hospital.
- Requires health-related licensing boards to adopt guidelines regarding patient counseling and education to be provided by a health care professional when prescribing an opioid analgesic for five or more days.
- Requires the Medicaid Director to adopt rules establishing a flat reimbursement fee for such a discussion.
- Revises the law requiring prescribers to review patient information in the Board of Pharmacy's Ohio Automated Rx Reporting System, by eliminating an exception for an opioid analgesic prescribed or personally furnished for seven days

The MetroHealth System supports SB 652 because the opioid epidemic has not showed any signs of abating, in fact since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic Ohio has seen it highest overdose fatalities with over 5000 opioid related fatalities annually since 2020. Prescription opioids continue to be a gateway to addiction and illicit opioid use. Because of Ohio's current laws, our Office of Opioid Safety was able to reduce total opioid pills prescribed in our system by 60 % and increase OARRS queries by over 40 % since 2017 greatly increasing the safety of our patients. This law will build on current subacute, chronic and acute pain rules to support clinicians further in order for them to provide the education patients need to be successful. In a busy clinical environment patient education is often undervalued by payers- this bill sends a strong message that Ohio values and is willing to pay for this vital prevention tool by reimbursing the provider's time to discuss the risk of addiction. What we have done in Ohio and what we continue to do is working and we are saving lives in the face of an ever -changing landscape of the opioid epidemic.

Chair Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Liston and members of the Senate Health Committee thank you for providing me the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on Senate Bill 652.

I'll be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.

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### **About The MetroHealth System**

The MetroHealth System is redefining health care by going beyond medical treatment to improve the foundations of community health and well-being: affordable housing, a cleaner environment, economic opportunity and access to fresh food, convenient transportation, legal help and other services. The system strives to become as good at preventing disease as it is at treating it.

The system's more than 600 doctors, 1,700 nurses and 7,800 employees go to work each day with a mission of service, to their patients and to the community. As Cuyahoga County's safety-net health system, MetroHealth plays an essential role in the region, caring for anyone and everyone, regardless of an ability to pay.

Founded in 1837, MetroHealth operates four hospitals, four emergency departments and more than 20 health centers and 40 additional sites throughout Cuyahoga County. The system serves more than 300,000 patients, two-thirds of whom are uninsured or covered by Medicare or Medicaid.

MetroHealth is home to Cuyahoga County's most experienced Level I Adult Trauma Center, verified since 1992, and Ohio's only adult and pediatric trauma and burn center.

As an academic medical center, MetroHealth is committed to research and to teaching and training tomorrow's caregivers. Each active staff physician holds a faculty appointment at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine. Its main campus hospital houses the Cleveland Metropolitan School District's Lincoln-West School of Science & Health, the only high school in America located inside a hospital.

Knowing that good health is about much more than good medical care, MetroHealth has launched the Institute for H.O.P.E.™ (Health, Opportunity, Partnership, Empowerment), which uses a coordinated, collaborative and strategic approach to help patients with non-medical needs such as healthy food, stable housing and job training.

The MetroHealth Glick Center, a new 11-floor hospital, is under construction on the system's main campus in Cleveland and is scheduled to welcome its first patients in October 2022. The billion-dollar project is the cornerstone of a wider neighborhood revitalization effort led by the system and its partners in the community.

For more information, visit [metrohealth.org](https://metrohealth.org).