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HB 463: Elimination of the District Advisory Council Opponent Testimony: Ryan Tekac Ohio House Health Committee May 9, 2022

I appreciate the opportunity to provide opponent testimony on House Bill 463. I am gravely concerned by this legislation, as it would significantly weaken the robust public health framework for the appointment of Board of Health members. HB 463 is proposing changes that are not necessary in most cases. I have had the opportunity to serve the public as a public health employee for nearly 19 years. The District Advisory Council for Mahoning County conducts business and exercises its authority in a suitable fashion over the 19 years that I have been employed.

House Bill 463 strips the townships of their governing oversight of the Board of Health and Board members should be selected by the representatives of ALL political subdivision in which we serve their residents and not limited to just one political subdivision served by the Board of Health. ALL political subdivisions that are served by the Board of Health and contribute inside millage to support the operations of the health district should retain the current authorities vested in the District Advisory Council. The County Commissioners contribute no inside millage to the operations of the local health district.

The proposals in HB 463 will not resolve the local issues brought to light in discussions with the bill sponsor and other interested parties, most notably concerns about state rules that govern most delegated state programs (e.g., food, home sewage) and COVID-19 mandates and enforcement dictated by orders of the Governor and/or the Director of Health. Elected officials in political subdivisions know their community issues and understand the processes necessary to work with the Board of Health to obtain resolution. In addition, the Mahoning County Commissioners always have a voice along with a seat at the District Advisory council meetings. It is not often they take the opportunity to attend and for this reason, it is important to retain the status of the District Advisory Council as is.

Respectfully,

Len Perry
Board President