



CATHOLIC CONFERENCE OF OHIO

Proponent Testimony HB 558 Regarding Drug Repository Program Senate Health Committee

Chair Huffman, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Health Committee, my name is Brian Hickey. I am an Associate Director of the Catholic Conference of Ohio. The Conference is the official representative of the Catholic Church in matters of public policy. We support HB 558, which will enhance the ability of charitable pharmacies, hospitals, and nonprofit clinics to serve those needing expensive, life-saving and enhancing drugs.

We are proud of the tremendous work of St. Vincent de Paul Charitable Pharmacies in their efforts to serve many low-income Ohioans. The Catholic Church consistently calls for public policy and structures to have a particular focus on a preferential option for the poor and vulnerable. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Ethical and Religious Directives states that Catholic health care should distinguish itself by service to and advocacy for those whose social condition puts them at the margins of our society, including the uninsured and underinsured.

To that end, HB 558 will enhance the opportunities for Catholic healthcare agencies and other charitable pharmacies to directly address the lack of access to medication for uninsured and underinsured Ohioans. We ask that the Senate Health Committee gives timely consideration to passing this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.