



Rachel Baker
State Representative

Chair Pavliga, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Brewer, and members of the House Behavioral Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony today on HB 352 with my joint sponsor, Representative Carruthers.

HB 352 would establish the Adverse Childhood Experiences Study Commission. The purpose of this commission will be to compile experts and individuals with lived experiences to discuss and recommend legislative strategies for addressing the prevalence and long-term effects of ACEs.

Adverse childhood experiences, commonly referred to as ACEs, are classified as “potentially traumatic events” that occur during childhood, or ages 0-17.¹ ACEs often result in long-term negative effects on children, including but not limited to higher risk for chronic diseases, mental illnesses, learning disorders, substance abuse, and juvenile and adult delinquency. ACEs can impact families generation after generation, as parents with past exposure to ACEs often pass along the resulting negative social determinants and health outcomes to their children.

In 2015, 61% of Ohio adults reported exposure to at least one ACE in their childhood,² and this number is not going down. It is time that we recognize the role that ACEs play in our state, and work to develop strong policies to combat them – the main goal of this study commission.

Not only will ACEs prevention improve the health and wellbeing of Ohioans, but it will also have a large economic impact. Decreasing ACEs exposure can eliminate more than \$10 billion per year in healthcare and related spending. For example, household out-of-pocket healthcare costs are 18% higher for individuals exposed to one or two ACEs, and 30% higher for individuals exposed to three or more ACEs.³

The commission will consist of two members of the Senate and two members of the House. We will highlight a few of the other proposed members, which includes a current or former law enforcement officer with expertise in community or domestic violence, a representative from the department of children and youth, behavioral health professionals, healthcare providers, and

¹<https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/aces/index.html#:~:text=Overview,health%20or%20substance%20use%20problems>

² https://www.healthpolicyohio.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/ACEs_FactSheet1.pdf

³ https://www.healthpolicyohio.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/PolicyBrief_ACEs2_Final.pdf

individuals with lived experiences with ACEs. The commission will prepare a report each year to submit to the general assembly that summarizes potential legislative strategies and will cease to exist after four years.

Chair Pavliga, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Brewer, and members of the House Behavioral Health Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to speak today on behalf of HB 352. We would be happy to answer any questions at this time.