



**House Behavioral Health Committee
In-Person Proponent Testimony on HB 300
April 23, 2024**

Chairwoman Pavliga, Vice Chairwoman White, Ranking Member Brewer, and members of the House Behavioral Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony today on House Bill 300. My name is Dylan Armstrong and I'm a Public Policy Fellow with The Center for Community Solutions, a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank that aims to improve health, social and economic conditions through research, policy analysis and communication. We want to thank Representatives Baker and Ray for their work on HB 300 that would create a pilot program to facilitate the remote treatment of opioid use disorder.

As we all know, the opioid crisis has hit and continues to hit Ohio hard. Addiction, overdoses, and related fatalities continue to plague the state. In 2022, the most recent data available, 4,915 lives were claimed by unintentional drug overdoses. While this is a slight reduction from 2021, Ohio's highest year for unintentional drug overdose deaths, there is more we can do to reduce these deaths and House Bill 300 is a perfect example of a strategy to achieve this.

The most effective treatment for opioid use disorder is medication assisted treatment. Not only is this treatment shown to be clinically effective in preventing relapse and promoting overall recovery, but it has also been shown to reduce cases of HIV and other bloodborne illnesses. Patients receiving this treatment must report daily to a certified opioid treatment provider to receive a single dose administered and observed by staff. While there are many barriers that cause individuals to stop treatment, a commonly cited one is transportation. Treatment centers are often 30 minutes to an hour away from patients' homes. The distance, combined with work, childcare, or education obligations, and the strict dosing hours of the clinic can make it quite difficult for patients to continue treatment.

By allowing patients to engage in remote dosing of these life saving drugs the state can remove one of the largest barriers that cause patients to fall out of treatment. This will allow patients to continue treatment and will help save lives.

I want to thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony as Community Solutions always values the chance to weigh in on policy that would greatly impact the health and wellbeing of Ohioans. We would welcome the chance to share additional research that we have conducted in this space and are happy to answer any questions that you may have at this time.

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