

**HB 230**

**Opponent Testimony**

**Suzanne Plymale, PRS**

**Peer Health Navigator**

**Central Ohio Harm Reduction/SafePoint**

**10/24/2023**

Dear Chairman Ghanbari, Vice Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the House Homeland Security Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer opponent testimony for House Bill 230.

**I am a person in sustained recovery who has worked to assist others in defining their recovery for the last 5 years. I have countless tales of loss in this time including parental death from overdose. I have lost peers, clients, providers and colleagues. We needn't lose anyone else to preventable overdose death.**

**I work to mitigate the harms from drug use and provide the space, grace and time people may require to access help. Meeting people where they are and allowing them the dignity and autonomy to step through stages of change.**

According to the American journal of public health in June 2023; both fatal and non-fatal overdoses increase after drug interdiction. Supply-side disruptions have been proving fatal for over 50 years. The unintended consequence, while unintentional, is still quite significant. We know the populations most affected by criminalization of a medical and public health situation to be black and brown. We know disproportionately these are our neighbors and loved ones who have suffered the brunt of our carceral policies for generations.

Some better solutions would be to invest in the community. Invest in low barrier harm reduction services and housing first models. Invest in holistic evidence-based treatment solutions. Invest in real-time community based drug checking services. Invest in overdose prevention centers.

Please join me in turning the tide on preventable overdose deaths and the following tsunami of grief which follows.

Thank you for giving me the time and space to be heard.  
Please end this piece of legislation today and save lives.

Sincerely,

**Suzanne Plymale, PRS**

**Peer Health Navigator**