

HB 230

Opponent Testimony

Lis Regula, Ph.D.

10/22/2023

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

My name is Lis Regula, and I live in Columbus, Ohio. I am writing today to oppose HB230 as a overcrowding our prisons. This bill ignores the reality of addiction and substance use disorder. Instead, it reinforces incorrect ideas that penalties act as a deterrent, thereby wasting taxpayer dollars while hurting individuals and families.

As a Jewish man, one of my highest values is preserving life, and I can appreciate the desire to reduce deaths from adulterated drugs. We can look to states like [New York, Illinois, and North Carolina](#), or Ohio's current status as [third in the country](#) for Drug Induced Homicide prosecutions and [fifth in the country](#) for overdose fatalities, showing that harsher prosecution does not reduce death.

Instead of investing in housing more people in already dangerously overfilled prisons and an added burden on our criminal and incarceration systems, investment in our communities would do far better to reduce overdoses. Increasing Narcan/Naloxone and test strip distribution, investing in improved addiction treatment that follows current best practices and evidence, and increasing the services available to help low-income people would all be more effective ways to address the same problems you are attempting to address here. These would have the added benefit of not making it harder for people to earn a living after serving their time for crimes they committed while in their active addiction and not tearing families apart through incarceration.

Thank you for listening today and for your service to the state. Your concern in this matter shows that you care, and I would love to see that care expressed in evidence-based, fiscally responsible, and compassionate ways. I'm sure we can make Ohio a safer place for everyone, and I am happy to talk further if you have the time. In closing, I ask that you not forward this bill and focus on more effective solutions to our shared concerns.

Sincerely,

Lis Regula, Ph.D.

LKRegula@gmail.com

419-231-2204