



HOUSE BILL 49 – REGARDS AVAILABILTY OF HOSPITAL PRICE INFORMATION

PROPONENT TESTIMONY- OHIO SENATE SMALL BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY COMMITTEE

September 26, 2023

Chairman Lang, Vice-Chairman Wilkin, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Ohio Senate Small Business and Economic Opportunity Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on behalf of the nearly 21,000 members of the National Federation of Independent Business in Ohio (NFIB) to lend our support for House Bill 49. My name is Cameron Garczyk and I serve as the Assistant State Director for NFIB in Ohio.

For reference, NFIB is a small business trade association founded 80 years ago that is dedicated to representing the interests of small and independent businesses across our state and nation. NFIB's mission is to promote the right of our members to own, operate and grow their businesses. NFIB members come from all industry sectors and each of the 88 counties across Ohio. Our average member has 20 or fewer employees and has less than \$2 million in annual gross receipts.

HB 49 is about one goal, and that is price transparency. This legislation would require hospitals throughout our state to make publicly available, both in person and online, the varying charges of each shoppable service or procedure that is rendered by each hospital. This bipartisan measure would codify into Ohio law the standard that is already in effect at the federal level, however, a lack of enforcement of the federal provisions has resulted in slow implementation by hospital systems. Under this bill, the Ohio Department of Health would be granted enforcement responsibility to manage compliance.

According to NFIB's quadrennial *Problems and Priorities* survey of our membership, the affordability of healthcare has consistently ranked as the number one most severe issue facing small business owners since 1986.¹ While many small business owners want to be able to offer health insurance to their employees,

many are unable to due to the immense costs involved. Any measure that can contribute to more transparent healthcare costs while not hindering the quality or timeliness of care is something that should be widely applauded. As was discussed by the bill's sponsors already, there exists no business in our state who can charge a fee for a good or service and not make available to a potential client or customer what the cost may be. The complexity of costs for a healthcare service or procedure can be daunting to navigate and this measure will ensure that costs are broken down in a simple manner.

There exist few examples of true bipartisanship on issues today, particularly at the federal level. HB 49 will ensure that the goal of healthcare price transparency, which has been championed by multiple Republican and Democrat presidential administrations, will be enforced in Ohio so that our state's citizens, including price-conscious small business owners, can make informed decisions on healthcare options for themselves and their employees. NFIB appreciates the committee's consideration of this legislation, and I am happy to answer any questions at this time.

¹ <https://www.nfib.com/content/analysis/national/announcing-the-2020-small-business-problems-and-priorities-every-four-years-report/>