



Proponent Testimony HB 8
President, Academy of Medicine of Cleveland & Northern Ohio
April 9, 2025

Chairman Schmidt, Vice Chair Deeter, Ranking Member Somani, and members of the Ohio House Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today in support of House Bill 8. My name is Marie Schaefer, MD and I am a family medicine physician at a major health system in Cleveland and President of the Academy of Medicine of Cleveland and Northern Ohio, or AMCNO.

The AMCNO, founded in 1824, is the region's professional medical association and the oldest professional association in Ohio. We are a non-profit 501(c)6 representing physicians and medical students from all the contiguous counties in Northern Ohio. We are proud to be the stewards of Cleveland's medical community of the past, present, and future.

The mission of the Academy of Medicine of Cleveland & Northern Ohio is to support physicians in being strong advocates for all patients and promote the practice of the highest quality of medicine. On behalf of our 7,400 members and their patients, I ask you to support HB 8 to require health benefit plans and Medicaid program coverage of biomarker testing.

We are proud to be members of a coalition, organized by the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, featuring over 40 patient and provider organizations across Ohio supporting this critical legislation. HB 8 would ensure that more Ohioans can benefit from biomarker testing—the key to unlocking targeted therapies. This legislation would guarantee Ohioans covered by state-regulated insurance plans, including Medicaid, have coverage for biomarker testing when medically appropriate.

Biomarker testing, and its ability to allow physicians to use targeted therapies, has been a game-changer in medicine, especially when it comes to the treatment of cancer.

55% of cancer clinical trials currently use biomarker testing. When doctors can connect their patients to the most appropriate targeted therapies using biomarker testing, patients can avoid other treatments that may be ineffective or have additional side effects,

Unfortunately, there are currently significant access barriers to biomarker testing. A significant percentage of cancer patients and survivors do not receive biomarker testing because it is not covered by their insurer or the out-of-pocket costs would be too high. 74,140 Ohioans are diagnosed with cancer every year. This legislation could have a significant impact on their care. Over 20 states have passed biomarker coverage legislation, and it's time to make Ohio the 21st.

It is for all these reasons that we stand in support of HB 8. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue. I am happy to answer any questions.