



Ohio Senate

State Senator
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Columbus, Ohio 43215
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Committees

Education, Chair
Finance
Finance-Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee
Health, Human Services and Medicaid
Judiciary
Ways and Means
Joint Education Oversight Committee

Peggy Lehner

State Senator
6th District

February 14, 2018

Dear Chairman Hatch and Ranking Member Wyden,

I am responding to the Senate Finance Committee's request for recommendations regarding the opioid crisis.

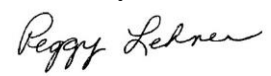
I am a State Senator from the Dayton, Ohio area. I am a lifelong resident of this area, and have been deeply embedded in the community for many years. The opioid epidemic that plagues Dayton, specifically, and Ohio and the nation, generally, sickens and saddens me.

I care so deeply about my constituents and all Ohioans that I sponsored language in the state fiscal year 2018-2019 state operating budget that requires Ohio's Departments of Medicaid, Health, Mental Health and Addiction Services, and Job and Family Services to work with Brigid's Path to implement a pilot program that allows Brigid's Path to test its model of service delivery – medical care for babies withdrawing from opiates and supportive services and case management for their families. Under my leadership, this pilot program survived a contentious state budget process. Importantly, we were also able to attach an appropriation for \$500,000 of state general revenue funds each year of the fiscal year biennium. This funding was critical to allowing Brigid's Path to open its doors and serve babies. As of the writing of this letter, Brigid's Path has served four babies, and is poised to welcome others.

The state funds I secured for Brigid's Path, and the private donations that Jill Kingston, Brigid's Path CEO, has been able to raise, are simply a down payment on the success of the program. In order to remain sustainable and stable, Medicaid reimbursement for pediatric recovery centers like Brigid's Path is imperative. Importantly, Medicaid reimbursement will not only help Brigid's Path provide high quality services to Dayton-area babies born addicted and their families, it will make possible the replication of the Brigid's Path model. This will directly alleviate some of the burden caused by the opioid epidemic. Also importantly, reimbursing a provider like Brigid's Path adds little cost to the Medicaid program, as it is an alternative to hospital care.

Please consider passing the CRIB Act to allow Medicaid reimbursement for pediatric recovery centers. Doing so will open a new avenue of service delivery in Ohio and every other state in the nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Peggy Lehner".

Peggy Lehner
State Senator
6th District