



**Ohio Renal Association
Statement of Opposition
March 16, 2018**

Proposed Ohio Constitutional Amendment to Place Reimbursement Limits and Duplicate Regulations on Dialysis Care Operations

The Ohio Renal Association advocates for Ohioans who need dialysis care, by educating the public and government about the unique needs of patients with end stage renal disease, ESRD. The Association supports public policies and programs that best help our members provide Ohioans with consistent, high quality dialysis care.

At 326 local clinics across Ohio, our members deliver vital life-saving dialysis treatments three times every week to an estimated 18,000 Ohioans who rely on these services to live.

A proposed Ohio constitutional amendment, to add regulations to out-patient dialysis clinics and to limit reimbursements to providers, was filed publicly on January 30, 2018. The special interest group behind the proposal has declared they intend to place it on the November 6 statewide ballot. The proposal emanates from California, where a similar initiative by the same group is scheduled to appear on that state's ballot on the same day.

Proponents have hired paid circulators to gather signatures on petitions. To be on this fall's Ohio ballot, petitioners must file sufficient signatures by July 4.

Should the issue make it to the Ohio ballot, the Ohio Renal Association (ORA) will oppose the amendment first and foremost because it would reduce access to care and harm patients. ORA has closely examined the proposal and determined it is deceptive and not in the best interests of Ohioans. Our reasons follow:

- We are deeply concerned that interests from outside Ohio are trying to amend our state's Constitution to regulate dialysis clinic operations.
- We believe the poorly-drafted ballot proposal would ultimately limit access to dialysis treatments for Ohio's 18,000 dialysis patients and add costly, bureaucratic red tape to the system of dialysis care.
- We foresee that the imposition of arbitrary limits on clinic reimbursement will cause clinics to become unviable financially. As a result, clinics will be forced to cut back care or close.
- We know that the amendment's requirements for so-called minimum patient care standards are duplicative of laws and rules already on the books at the state and federal levels.

As written, we believe the Amendment will not achieve its stated purpose to "...ensure that individuals suffering from end-stage renal disease have access to affordable high quality kidney dialysis treatment." This amendment would do the exact opposite since it would make it very difficult for

many providers to afford to operate a financially viable dialysis facility. This would lead to decreased access to care for patients who need the lifesaving treatments, three times every week.

ORA will take immediate steps to inform our colleagues in the health care community and Ohioans generally about the serious harms posed by this ill-conceived proposal.