



Abbott Nutrition
3300 Stelzer Road
Columbus, Ohio 43219
T: +1 800 614 624 7677

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Dear Senator Manning and Members of the Ohio Senate Health and Human Services Committee:

This letter is submitted in **support of Senate Bill 245**, which creates a Malnutrition Prevention Commission to study malnutrition among older adults. Abbott is a global healthcare company devoted to improving life through the development of products and technologies that span the breadth of healthcare, with a portfolio of science-based offerings in nutritionals, diagnostics, medical devices, and branded generic pharmaceuticals. Abbott's nutritional division, headquartered in Columbus, Ohio, has more than 2,000 employees working to discover and develop nutritional and related healthcare products that advance the quality of life for people of all ages.

Malnutrition is frequently thought of as "a lack of food or proper food." But that is not the case. Malnutrition can occur in people of all ages—including in the developed world—with the elderly at a higher risk. It is often overlooked or not commonly detected because people assume it cannot happen to them. This is especially unfortunate, because malnutrition is highly preventable and affects day-to-day quality of life and recovery time following health procedures or illnesses.

Many people who are managing a health issue do not realize the importance of nutrition to their recovery and health outcomes, as evidenced by the fact that at least one in three adult patients in the hospital is malnourished or at risk of malnutrition. And the effects of malnutrition go beyond feeling hungry; it can impact physical health, daily function, independence and recovery from illness, injury and surgery—with profound effects on society and governments.

With rising healthcare costs, governments, hospitals and payers are looking for ways to effectively address health issues while reducing costs—a theme that Rob Miller, Divisional Vice President of Scientific Affairs and R&D at Abbott's nutritional division, wrote about in an op-ed article in *U.S. News & World Report*. As a leader in nutritional products, Abbott is dedicated to combating malnutrition. We are providing high-quality therapeutic nutrition products that can help improve patient care in a cost-effective manner. We are also conducting research to understand the impact nutrition can have on health outcomes.

We believe that Ohio's older adults will benefit from a Commission that can study the impact of malnutrition across care settings in the state, investigate strategies for malnutrition, and report its findings to the Governor and General Assembly. We urge you to vote in support of Senate Bill 245.

Sincerely,

Mary Beth Arensberg, PhD, RDN, LD, FAND
Director, Health Policy and Programs