



Representative Terry Boose
57th House District

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House State & Local Government Committee
Sponsor Testimony – House Bill 227

Chairman Blair, Vice Chair Anielski, Ranking Member Clyde and members of the State and Local Government Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Ohio's Health Care Compact. Echoing my colleague's sentiments, the Health Care Compact is the best option for Ohio to preserve federalism, reform runaway federal health care programs, and ensure higher quality health care for Ohioans.

The U.S. Constitution was wisely framed around the principle of federalism, allowing for power to be dispersed across multiple levels of government. What we have witnessed over the past several decades, however, is the gradual usurpation of authority over health care decisions away from state and local governments toward a growing federal bureaucracy. This transfer of power has only served to stifle state-level innovation while increasing health care costs. The heavily flawed rollout of the Affordable Care Act is only the latest example of this disturbing trend. Taking no action to reform the current system is unsustainable. The Health Care Compact seeks to change course and reverse the upward flow of power.

As the federal government has assumed greater authority over health care, the fiscal condition of our national healthcare system has only grown more perilous. Left unchecked, these programs will continue to grow in size and drive our national debt and deficits for decades to come. Since Washington gridlock is unable to produce the needed reforms to these programs, states must take the lead. Ohio has already produced successful results in reducing its Medicaid costs, but greater flexibility will be needed for future reforms. The Health Care Compact is Ohio's opportunity to gain the necessary flexibility to reform these unsustainable entitlement programs to ensure their long-term solvency.

Finally, the Health Care Compact will produce better health care outcomes for Ohioans. Just as Ohio's health care needs are unique to Ohio, the solutions to those needs must be equally creative. Instead of navigating a cumbersome federal bureaucracy, citizens will be provided greater choice and flexibility in making their personal health care decisions. Authority over personal health care decisions will remain closer to the people at the state level, not a distant, inflexible federal government. And as power and funding is kept closer to home, greater accountability and increased transparency over Ohio taxpayer dollars will result.

We have seen where the current federal model of top-down health care has taken us: higher costs, more bureaucracy, and less accountability. The time is now to unleash the power of competitive federalism to allow states like Ohio to make their own decisions and control their own finances in crafting their unique health care solutions. The Health Care Compact provides Ohioans with a choice: they can place their faith in the federal government or themselves. We believe that they will prefer the latter.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify on behalf of this bill. We would be glad to answer any questions you may have at this time.