



Ohio Osteopathic Association

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May 30, 2017

The Honorable Louis Blessing, Chair
House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
Columbus, Ohio

Re: Written Testimony in Support of HB 145

Dear Rep. Blessing:

I am writing on behalf of the Ohio Osteopathic Association as a strong proponent of HB 145, which requires the State Medical Board of Ohio to establish a confidential process for the treatment of impaired physicians. This process, known as “one-bite,” is designed to ensure patient safety by getting impaired physicians the help they need with early intervention and treatment assistance.

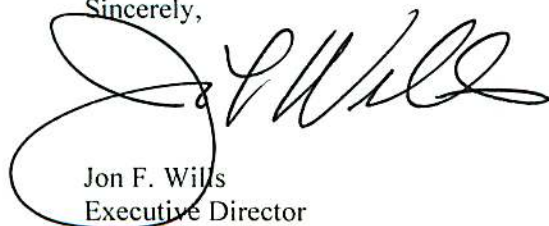
The Ohio Osteopathic Association is a non-profit professional association that advocates for Ohio's 4,441 licensed osteopathic physicians (DOs) practicing in Ohio, and the Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine. DOs represent 13 percent of the total physicians practicing in Ohio and 26 percent of the state's family physicians.

Although the “one-bite” process has been recognized in the Ohio Revised Code for decades, this legislation is the result of a strong collaboration between the State Medical Board, the Ohio Physicians Health Program and the Medical Association Coalition (MAC) to get the process right. The MAC is a coalition of treatment providers, associations and concerned professions that includes the Ohio Osteopathic Association, the Ohio State Medical Association, the Ohio Physicians Health Program and 14 other organizations and professionals. The MAC had numerous meetings with the Medical Board for more than a year to refine and improve the existing one-bite mechanism.

The collaborative process used to draft this bill clearly illustrates how the law-making process should work. The group identified issues, explored alternatives, researched best practices in other states and then worked together to find consensus and draft legislation. The Ohio Osteopathic Association in particular would like to thank Rep. Steve Huffman and Rep. Robert Sprague for working with former state Rep. Cheryl Grossman and former Supreme Court Justice Evelyn Stratton to get all the stakeholders in the same room to produce what we believe creates a model impaired professional treatment program that can be used by all licensing boards in Ohio.

We urge the House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee to favorably report HB 145. We will be happy to provide additional information to committee members upon request.

Sincerely,



Jon F. Wills
Executive Director