



House Bill 177 - May 14, 2019
Testimony of Dr. Brad Raetzke

Chairman Merrin, Vice Chairman Manning, Ranking Member Boyd and members of the House Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to express opposition to House Bill 177 which would grant independent practice to nurse practitioners.

The American College of Emergency Physicians, Ohio Chapter (Ohio ACEP) represents nearly 1600 emergency medicine physicians in this state. As I am sure you are well aware, the emergency department is a fast-paced and complicated practice environment. Emergency physicians see and treat conditions that cross the entire spectrum of medicine. We see every patient that walks through our door regardless of presenting symptoms, insurance coverage, medical history, etc.

Our association values the contributions of the allied healthcare professionals in the emergency department. We could not do our job without advanced practice nurses, physician assistants, and many other members of our healthcare team. However, our members believe strongly that a physician should remain the head of the healthcare team. Our education, training and experience cannot be replaced in the healthcare field.

You have heard today from physician leaders across the state explaining why HB 177 is not needed, will not increase patient access, and will not improve care for Ohioans. All of your constituents deserve high quality healthcare. Any perceived access shortages should not be “solved” by removing access to the highest trained member of the healthcare team, the physician. It would serve the citizens of Ohio best by looking at options that will truly positively impact access to care. For example, telemedicine would be a better, patient centered solution that can reduce cost and provide care to rural areas of the state. We encourage the committee to explore alternative options, such as telemedicine, in more detail, instead of HB 177.

We believe strongly that current team based healthcare model is in the best interest of this state. Patients truly benefit by a team approach, in which they have multiple caregivers, all who provide a different perspective to the patient. Physicians, with their extensive training are uniquely situated to provide critical care to patients who are becoming increasingly complex and ill. This makes physicians uniquely qualified to lead the healthcare team. Patients deserve high quality care, especially in the emergency department where they are at their most vulnerable.

Thank you for your consideration of this perspective.

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