

January 22, 2020

As an advanced practice registered nurse practitioner (APRN) for over 20 years, I support passage of Ohio H.B.177, the elimination of the mandated physician standard care agreement (SCA), requiring the formal arrangement of physician collaboration. Removal of this barrier expands access to efficient, accessible, cost-effective care. Access to care is a complex, multifactorial issue; affordable care does not equal accessible care. Ohio leads the nation in emergency room visits by Ohio Medicaid recipients, compared to other states. Nearly 1.5 million Ohioans across 159 Health Professional Shortage Areas in Ohio lack access to primary care leaving 45% of the demand unmet. Ohio ranks 40th in America's 2018 Health Rankings by the United Health Foundation and 35th in the U.S. on health care access and quality measures reported by U.S. News & World Report's 2018 Best State Rankings. In 2018, Ohio's uninsured rate increased the past year by 58,000, one of only eight states and one of only four Medicaid expansion states. States that have no standard care arrangement have been shown to have fewer non-emergency ER visits. Significant costs arise when people lacking access to care not only present to costly ERs for primary care that could have been obtained in an office but also delay seeking care, arriving much sicker than had they sought earlier treatment. Twenty-one states no longer require standard care arrangements.

H.B. 177 eliminates cost and administrative barriers that limit APRNs' ability to practice according to their legal and full authority already granted under the exclusive authority of the

Ohio Board of Nursing: evaluating; diagnosing; ordering and interpreting diagnostics; initiating and managing treatments; prescribing medications. Ohio H.B. 177 does not expand APRN scope of practice. Consultation with physicians and other health team members will continue just as it does now, through referrals and interprofessional collaboration. Since the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, more APRNs care for complex, chronically ill persons, becoming providers of choice. Ohio should allow APRNs to practice to the full extent of their education and training, as legally authorized. Pass H.B.177; improve health care access for all Ohioans.

Sincerely,

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