

Statement to the Ohio House Health Committee

H.B. 273 - Prohibit requiring physician to have maintenance of certification

Presented by Brett Coldiron, M.D., F.A.C.P., F.A.A.D

October 11, 2017

Chairman Huffman and members of the House Health Committee, my name is Brett Coldiron, M.D., and I am testifying today in support of House Bill 273.

To start off, I would like the committee to know I have nothing personal to gain from passage of this legislation since I am old enough to be “grandfathered” in as lifetime board certified in Internal Medicine and Dermatology. However, since I was serving as president of the American College of Mohs surgeons and American Academy of Dermatology, I did retake the certification exam and participate in MOC, just to walk the walk, so to speak.

Maintenance of Certification is an unfunded mandate on younger physicians of no proven benefit. My personal experience with MOC has demonstrated how useless much of it is. As a subspecialist treating skin cancer, most of what I must study and retest on are diseases I will never see. The “quizzes” I pay for and self-score are silly, and the 10 year exam terrifying since it has little or no relevance to my daily activities.

Please note that I am not saying that initial board certification is not of value (although about 10% of Ohio physicians have not attained initial board certification). I think the requirement for several years of certified residency training and years of study do set a high-quality bar for physicians, and believe it is a useful exercise for the physician, and useful for public safety and quality assurance. I do not believe a practicing physician loses all of this every 10 years, in fact they learn much more as they go. The MOC process assumes that we are all rusty scuba tanks that need to be pressure tested at 10-year intervals. I must also point out that Ohio physicians are required to complete 100 continuing medical education hours every two years for their medical licensure, which I have no complaint about. So even if there is some leakage, there is already some topping off.

I think one board certification gauntlet is enough. I note that physicians are the only professional group masochistic enough to self-flagellate themselves with re-certification in such a fashion. Lawyers pass their bar once. Physicians assistants and nurse practitioners, don't go to medical school for four years, don't complete a multiyear residency, not to mention a board certification exam, yet enjoy much of the practice autonomy of physicians.

Physician burnout has been identified as a major issue for Ohio physicians and relieving them of these onerous mandates can only help. These re-certification requirements cost a lot of money, and take a lot of time. National specialty board examiners make a lot of money off these fees, and have been publicly embarrassed by their greed.

Ohio still has a shortage of physicians relative to other midwestern states, and anything to make the environment more hospitable is welcome. Some physicians may argue that only physicians should regulate physicians, a position I

agree with until it results in unreasonable tyranny by the few, who may materially profit from the rest. Then a legislative remedy such as this is called for.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify here today and am happy to answer any questions the committee members may have.

Thank you

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