

Maintenance of Certification (HB 273) - House Health Committee

Chairman Huffman & Members of the House Health Committee:

I am Dr. Claire Wolfe, past president of the Academy of Medicine of Columbus and Franklin County (before it became the Columbus Medical Association), the Columbus Medical Association Foundation and the Ohio State Medical Association. I graduated from the Ohio State University College of Medicine in 1968 and have been practicing medicine in Columbus since then. I'm currently employed by Orthopedic One.

I'm writing today to state my opposition to House Bill 273.

While I sincerely appreciate the interest shown by Representatives Gavarone and Johnson, I don't believe the legislature is needed to settle an issue that is professional in nature. The qualifications for physicians to practice- safely- is an issue that should be determined by their peers: at the hospital level, with their professional organizations, with the certifying boards and by the State Medical Board.

The legislature should not be involved in medicine's standard-setting debate. How will this impact medical staffs setting their Bylaws in the hospitals? Although some physicians are concerned that they will lose hospital privileges because of the ramifications of the maintenance of certification proposed requirements, those requirements are set to assure the public that their physicians are up to date and practicing the best medicine for the public's health and safety. I've sat on and chaired the Credentials Committee at Mt. Carmel as well as its MediGold Medicare Advantage product, and I can assure you that those committees are quite generous in how they assess continuing education and recertification. The hospital Credentials Committees are composed of a broad range of practicing physicians from multiple different specialties.

I'm sure the bill's sponsors and the Health Committee have heard of some of the draconian and expensive measures some of the specialty boards have set in place for recertification. But, as an active member of the American Medical Association's House of Delegates (for nearly 30yrs), I can assure you that these concerns have been heard, debated extensively, and action is being taken to work with the boards to change the onerous requirements. Many boards have already done so.

I believe having the legislature legislate rules for a profession's educational requirements would set a bad precedent, and I would urge the Committee to consider carefully the possible ramifications for the quality and safety of health care for you, your family and the public.

I'm sorry I couldn't make the Committee meeting in person but, should there be further testimony or questions, I would be happy to respond.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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