Amendment Talking Points- HB 87

Madame Chair, members of the Senate Education Committee, my name is Lori Herf and I represent the Council of Benefit Organizations. This is a group of consortia located throughout the state of Ohio that pool health insurance benefits for thousands of public employees.

The consortia are organized and regulated under Ohio Revised Code section 9.833 and may establish and maintain individual self-insurance programs such as medical, dental and prescription benefits in combination with other political subdivisions or county boards.

COBO members serve many underserved areas of the state where healthcare services may be scarce or not easily accessible. To address access to care issues, many employers contract for health clinic services delivered on-site. You see these cropping up in schools and educational service centers where a school district may contract for clinic services or in employer organizations like Progressive or even the state of Ohio with an on-site clinic.

Though the statute is currently silent relative to pools contracting for such services, member organizations would like to clarify in statute that it is permissible for pools established in accordance with ORC 9.833 to contract for medical or health services much in the same way that we currently contract for other services.

It is important to note that individually any of these public employers may contract for these services. This amendment would simply clarify that these public employees may also jointly contract for these services as they would their self-insurance programs.

Members of these pools and their families would be able, and in fact encouraged to use the clinic, as they can receive care for substantially lower or at no cost to support treatment compliance. Dedicated clinics have been coexisting in other markets for over a decade where consortia and stand-alone plans have benefitted collectively. Contracting with clinics does not replace traditional fee for service provider options already available to members.

Madame Chair, simply put, the amendment before you would allow these pools to contract for on-site clinic services, as the individual employers may do currently.

We thank the committee for your consideration of this amendment.