



OHIO ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

**Written Testimony submitted in opposition to Senate Bill 164
Presented by Don Mack, MD on behalf of the
Ohio Academy of Family Physicians
Senate Health Committee Hearing - Tuesday, November 14, 2017**

Chairman Burke, Vice Chairman Beagle, Ranking Member Tavares, members of the Ohio Senate Health Committee, thank you for allowing me to submit written testimony for the consideration of the committee today.

My name is Dr. Don Mack. I am a family physician employed by the Ohio State University Department of Family Medicine where I see patients and teach geriatric and hospice medicine to medical students, residents and fellows. I am also the current President of the Ohio Academy of Family Physicians and am presenting this testimony on behalf of OAFP.

The Ohio Academy of Family Physicians is a statewide professional association with 4,900 family physician, family medicine resident and medical student members across Ohio. Family physicians are dedicated to treating the whole person. Family medicine's cornerstone is an ongoing, personal patient-physician relationship focusing on integrated care. Unlike other specialties that are limited to a particular organ or disease, family medicine integrates care for patients of all genders and every age, and advocates for the patient in a complex health care system.

The Ohio Academy of Family Physicians follows the American Academy of Family Physicians' policy on the criminalization of medical practice which states "the AAFP takes all reasonable and necessary steps to ensure that medical decision-making and treatment, exercised in good faith, does not become a violation of criminal law."

We are deeply concerned with the overall intent of Senate Bill 164 and, more specifically, its attempts to interfere with the patient-physician relationship. Our most pointed criticism is directed at the phrase "or by any individual or entity based on the individual's or entity's involvement in abortions."

This language is not only ill-advised, it is dangerous. Health care decisions should be made by a patient in consultation with her physician(s). Patients deserve an environment that encourages open communication with their physicians on health care options appropriate for their health status.

This legislation would potentially discourage and prohibit physicians from discussing a safe and legal health care service with their patients. This is an unprecedented level of legislative interference in the patient-physician relationship.

The Ohio Academy of Family Physicians urges the committee to reject this legislation. The proposal represents an inappropriate and misguided intrusion into the patient-physician relationship and actually seeks to criminalize a physician for discussing a legal, safe, and appropriate health care service with their patients. This is a dangerous bill and it should not pass.

We respectfully ask for a no vote.

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