



**Representative Theresa Gavarone and Representative Bill Reineke  
3<sup>rd</sup> House District and 88<sup>th</sup> House District**

Sponsor Testimony for Sub. HB 131  
Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee  
May 22, 2018

**Representative Reineke:**

Chairman Burke, Vice Chair Beagle, Ranking Member Tavares, and Members of the Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak today to encourage the passage of Substitute House Bill 131. This legislation updates the practice act of Physical Therapists to specify that PTs make a diagnosis as a part of their daily work with patients. The bill specifically adds a definition of a “physical therapy diagnosis” and states that a "Physical therapy diagnosis" **does not include a medical diagnosis**.

As Ohio continues to combat the devastating opioid epidemic, we must promote and encourage pain management modalities without the use of opioids. House Bill 131 is a vehicle to do just that. Physical Therapists are rigorously trained, educated at a doctorate level, and ready to provide healing approaches, over long-term or high-dosage use of addictive prescription painkillers.

I am pleased to report that Sub. HB 131 passed out of House Health committee with a vote of 15-0 and the House Floor with a vote of 95-0.

**Representative Gavarone:**

Physical Therapists in Ohio have been practicing under a direct access law for over 12 years. Direct access means a Physical Therapist can see and treat patients without a referral from a Physician. Physical Therapists are still required to refer patients to another healthcare provider should the patient’s condition be outside the scope of practice of the Physical Therapist. If Sub. HB 131 is passed, this section remains unchanged.

House Bill 131 will bring Ohio in line with at least 21 other states that specify that Physical Therapists diagnose. I think it is important to note that many other healthcare providers in Ohio have language included in their scope of practice allowing them to make a diagnosis.

Throughout the committee process, this legislation underwent many changes to address concerns raised by the physician community. After much negotiation, the bill now has no known opponents.

Though the bill does not go as far as I would have preferred, I feel the final version of the bill moves the practice of Physical Therapy in Ohio forward and that is good for all patients in the state and draws attention to non-opioid alternatives.

Chairman Burke, once again, thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of this legislation, and we would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.