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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to provide testimony in favor of the proposed SB 265 that has been introduced by Senator Matt Dolan, which would recognize pharmacists as providers in Ohio law. As a faculty member at one of Ohio's colleges of pharmacy, and a licensed pharmacist in the State of Ohio, this issue is near and dear to my heart. Obtaining provider status for pharmacists is not only vital to the profession of pharmacy, it is essential to improving patient care and quality of life to Ohio residents. Pharmacists are highly-educated, knowledgeable individuals who do much more than dispense medications. It has been well-documented in the literature that having pharmacists in medical offices, or as part of a medical team not only reduces medication errors, but also improves patient outcomes. Despite this, there is no avenue for reimbursement of our cognitive services. Until provider status is passed and pharmacists have a mechanism to bill for their services, patients will continue to be short-changed, as they will not benefit from having medication experts involved in all physicians' offices or on all medical teams that round in hospitals.

I have personally dealt with this struggle, as I have been approached by a large physician group in Toledo, Ohio who would like me to provide services to their patients. The physicians in the practice understand the importance of having

pharmacists involved in reviewing medication regimens, providing patient education, and preventing medication errors, among other things. However, when requested to develop a business plan to provide pharmacist services, it is impossible to create something that would be self-sustaining, as we are not recognized as providers and cannot bill for the services that we provide on our own. The physicians I have worked with cannot fathom why with doctoral-level training that pharmacists do not have provider status, but other healthcare professionals with less training are recognized as healthcare providers.

Pharmacists are willing and able to help; however, we need the recognition and ability to be reimbursed for our services, in order to expand our reach. I urge you to support SB 265 to formally recognize pharmacists as providers under Ohio law, as it will be beneficial to pharmacy students, current pharmacists, and most importantly, it will improve patient care and health outcomes in the State of Ohio. Thank You for your attention to this matter, and please let me know if you have further questions that I can answer.

Sincerely,



Erin Thompson, PharmD, BCPS, BCACP  
Assistant Professor of Pharmacy Practice