



May 19, 2020

SB 308 Proponent Testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee

Chairman Eklund, Vice Chairman Manning, Ranking Member Thomas:

I am writing today on behalf the osteopathic physicians and students of the Ohio Osteopathic Association to express support for SB 308, which would provide much-needed civil liability protections.

The Ohio Osteopathic Association (OOA) represents approximately 5,000 actively practicing osteopathic physicians (DOs) in the state of Ohio and more than 1,000 osteopathic medical students. DOs represent about 1 in 6 of the total physicians practicing in Ohio and more than a quarter of the state's family physicians. Osteopathic physicians approach wellness through a comprehensive approach that recognizes the person is a unit of body, mind, and spirit.

Patient care during the COVID-19 pandemic has unleashed a host of concerns. As our physicians make up every medical speciality, our members have faced a wide array of challenges in these uncertain times. Ultimately, our physicians simply want to provide a path to wellness for patients without the constant concern for undue pandemic-related lawsuits.

The impacts of the pandemic will likely be felt for years to come. The postponement of elective procedures could create unintended negative consequences resulting from delayed care. The dramatically increased and requisite use of telehealth services in favor of in-office, hands-on patient care may also have an impact on patient outcomes. SB 308 expands civil immunity during this emergency and provides some peace of mind for health care providers in the face of immeasurable uncertainty. For this, the OOA would like to thank the sponsor of this legislation--Senator Matt Huffman--for his leadership on this important issue.

Thanks also to the Senate Judiciary Committee for its consideration.

Matt Harney
Executive Director
Ohio Osteopathic Association