



Proponent Testimony HB 102

June 6, 2023

Chairman Cutrona, Vice-Chair Gross, Ranking Member Somani, and esteemed members of the House Health Provider Services Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 102 "License Advanced Practice Respiratory Therapists." As a practicing Pulmonary and Critical Care physician and the medical director of the Masters in Respiratory Therapy Program and the Medical Intensive Care Units at The Ohio State Wexner Medical Center, I am writing to support the current proposed legislation regarding licensure for the Advanced Practice Respiratory Therapist (APRT). This new license would give current and future Respiratory Therapists a path to advance their skill set with additional training as an Advanced Practice Provider (APP) similar to that of a Certified Nurse Practitioner or Physician Assistant. APRTs bring unique experience and knowledge as Respiratory Therapists that position them to fill a need in the specialized care of patients with cardiopulmonary diseases (Pulmonary Medicine, Sleep Medicine, Critical Care and Anesthesiology). The need for an additional pool of qualified healthcare professionals to care for the growing population of patients with complex cardiopulmonary diseases has been outlined in the literature. It is projected that there will be a significant gap in the available physician workforce caring for cardiopulmonary diseases and the growth in demand as the population ages. APPs in general have been used as one strategy to expand the healthcare workforce but have been utilized less in the sub-specialty areas of cardiopulmonary care. The experience of the APRT with their prior respiratory therapy training will be able to help fill this gap in care and support pulmonary medicine, sleep, critical care and anesthesia physician groups and healthcare organizations. Physicians in these subspecialties feel that a specialized APP such as an APRT would benefit their practice and patient care based on a national needs assessment survey.

Given the identified need for an expanded pool of healthcare providers and fit of the APRT to fill this, a curriculum and accreditation system has been developed to allow for the training that would meet the requirement to become an APRT. The Commission for the Accreditation of Respiratory Care (CoARC) has set accreditation standards for advanced degree programs developed to train APRTs. The Ohio State University has a Masters in Respiratory Therapy program that was developed to meet the expectations of an APRT program and was successfully accredited by CoARC in 2019. The program successfully graduated its first class in 2021, and additional cohorts graduated in 2022 and 2023. The curriculum contains content to expand their skill set and is equivalent to other APP programs such as nurse practitioners and physician assistants. This equivalent education and training includes extensive coursework and clinical experience in prescribing and ordering medical care, medical devices and medications to provide evidence-based care. This includes providing evidence based care using national clinical practice guidelines in all patient care settings. Examples include ordering and interpreting pulmonary function testing to manage chronic pulmonary disease as well as ordering and interpreting sleep studies to determine the appropriate medical device to prescribe for sleep disorders.

In summary, I strongly support this important legislation to allow for the creation of Advanced Practice Respiratory Therapist licensure. This will create an additional workforce of qualified physician extenders to ease the gap in available providers and allow for the care of complex patients suffering from cardiopulmonary diseases. Thank you Chair Cutrona and members of the committee for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emily Amin', with a stylized, cursive script.

Emily Amin, MD

Medical Director, Masters in Respiratory Therapy Program
Medical Director, Medical Intensive Care Units
Assistant Professor, Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine
The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center