



Tim Schaffer
20th District

Ohio Senate
Senate Building
Room 137, First Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215
(614) 466-8076
sd20@ohiosenate.gov

Committees:
Agriculture & Natural Resources, Chair
Insurance
Rules and Reference
Transportation
Ways and Means

**House of Representatives Insurance Committee
Senate Bill 106— Sponsor Testimony
October 11, 2023**

Chairman Lampton, Vice Chair Barhorst, Ranking Member Miranda, and members of the House of Representatives Insurance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on Senate Bill 106.

Senate Bill 106 will remedy an oversight in workers compensation coverage, which was brought to my attention by a constituent in Newark.

Just over a year ago, this constituent was working as a flight nurse when she suffered a body fluid exposure from a patient. At a local hospital, she was treated and tested for blood borne pathogens. However, she was then informed that she was not eligible for worker's compensation for this testing.

According to the Revised Code, while nurses and physicians are required to be present on an air ambulance, they are not included with other first responders such as paramedics and EMTs in receiving workers' compensation for blood borne pathogen testing.

Thankfully, my constituent was able to get this decision reversed upon appeal, since she was also licensed as a paramedic, and thus eligible for compensation. However, this coverage loophole remains in code.

Senate Bill 106 simply expands the category of those eligible for workers' compensation coverage for testing for blood borne pathogens after exposure. Under this legislation, this category would include registered nurses, physicians, and any other person holding a current, valid certificate or license to practice a health care profession in this state, if they are staffing an air ambulance on behalf of a licensed air medical service organization in accordance with the Revised Code.

This brings registered nurses and physicians staffing an air ambulance into alignment with the workers' compensation coverage of other first responders who face unique challenges and dangers in their line of work.

Additionally, this bill also corrects an inadvertent link in the Bureau of Workers' Compensation part of the Revised Code to a criminal penalty section of the Revised Code. The bill simply decouples those sections of code while maintaining current law. This helps us avoid any unintended criminal law changes in this bill.

This bill has the support of the Ohio Nurses Association, and according to the Bureau of Workers' Compensation, any cost would be negligible, since they estimate situations like my constituent's will not occur frequently.

I am pleased to report that there was no opposition to the bill in the Senate.

Thank you once again Chairman Lampton and members of the committee for the opportunity to present this legislation to you today. I will be glad to answer any questions at this time.