



Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Health Committee. My name is Osei Mevs I serve as the Vice President of Government Affairs for Acadia Healthcare, and I am here today to provide proponent testimony on SB 81.

Acadia Healthcare provides inpatient psychiatric care, as well as mental health, counseling, and substance-abuse services across the United States with a substantial presence here in the state of Ohio. Specifically, Acadia healthcare operates three inpatient psychiatric facilities, two in Columbus and one in Cincinnati, as well as several substance abuse facilities across the state.

The legislation before you is a straightforward and safe solution to a number of issues facing facilities like ours in Ohio. Under Ohio law, we utilize nurse practitioners as part of our on-site care team. These practitioners work within a collaborative arrangement with physicians to always ensure patient safety during the care process. SB 81 with merely expand the signature authority of these practitioners within the context of those ongoing collaborative arrangements. This signature authority would be limited to hospital admission orders, hospital discharge orders, and treatment plans that are put together with input from the entire care team.

I would like to note for the committee at this point that Acadia Healthcare is not seeking to change the collaborative or supervisory agreement laws currently governing the practice of Ohio NPs or PAs.

As this committee is aware there are not enough psychiatrists to meet the growing patient need here in Ohio. In addition, the data clearly shows that we are not on pace to replace the doctors that we will lose to retirement in the coming years. The portion of this bill that Acadia is particularly focused on is the increased signature authority of advanced practice nurses specifically for services in the inpatient behavioral health setting.

If enacted this legislation would benefit our patients and their families by expediting the admission process, enhancing our ability to begin necessary treatment to stabilize patients in crisis, and a smoother discharge process allowing patients to leave treatment and access their continuum of care.

These benefits would make what can be an understandably distressing event for patients less so by eliminating delays and providing more efficient care.

We appreciate your consideration of SB 81 which we believe would provide much needed relief for a workforce spread too thin and increase access for patients with acute need.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this legislation and I would be happy to answer any questions.