

Senate Health Committee
Opponent Testimony – Senate Bill 126
Wednesday, January 24, 2024

Good Morning, Chairman Huffman, Vice Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Health Committee. My name is Diane Pleiman, and I serve as President and CEO for Premier Physician Network, the physician group for Premier Health Partners headquartered in Dayton. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 126.

Premier Health operates adult acute care hospitals at five locations in Southwest Ohio. Miami Valley Hospital is the third largest in the state. It offers the only adult Level I Trauma Center in the region and has one of the busiest emergency departments in Ohio. It operates a large Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and a regional Burn Center. It also serves the third highest number of Medicaid inpatients in Ohio. Additionally, Premier Health provides a large primary care and specialty physician company, urgent care services, home health care, behavioral health services, a strong telemedicine network, and a myriad of community partnerships and outreach.

Premier Health has encountered challenges related to workforce shortages for physicians, advanced practice providers and the staff needed to support their practice. The challenges include geographical disparities, the competition with more urban areas, patient demand with the aging population, work-life balance, and competition for talent.

Senate Bill 126 would limit a hospital's ability to utilize a non-compete when hiring a physician and be burdensome to adding to our mission's workforce. Premier invests a significant amount when hiring a physician. This not only includes the physician's salary, but also office space, equipment, and support staff to ensure operations. All of our physicians are employed through the Premier Physician Network which allows for a strong investment in our physician services.

Premier Health sincerely appreciate Senator Johnson's efforts in revising this bill since the previous General Assembly from a complete ban to a six month and 15-mile radius of the hospital noncompete. As a hospital system near the Indiana border our system would be at a significant disadvantage and would not be able to protect our investment without the use of larger non-competes.

Premier opposes this bill and prefers to utilize our current noncompete contracts to ensure a strong workforce and to support our patients in their medical needs. We are committed to working with the General Assembly and are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Diane Pleiman, FACHE, MBA

President and CEO, Premier Physician Network