

May 15, 2024

To: Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, and Members of the Senate Health Committee

Re: HB 73, "The Dave & Angie Patient and Health Provider Protection Act".

As a practicing physician in Ohio since 1985, I have watched the slow, steady decay of the doctor-patient relationship as electronic records became established and as hospitals began absorbing private practice doctors under their umbrella of control.

During COVID-19, hospital boards dictated the "standard of care" protocols for doctors without any consideration for the individuality of patients. It became obvious that the protocol dictates were based more on reimbursement rates than patient recovery rates. Doctors who were attempting to treat COVID-19 successfully were threatened and, in many cases, had administrative action taken against their licenses. There were certain FDA-approved drugs that pharmacists refused to fill right here in Ohio, not because these drugs are dangerous, but because of political agendas. It's hard to imagine that kind of hostile environment toward doctors. But it did, and it still does exist.

I personally experienced the chilling effect of expressing a medical opinion or raising concerns about the COVID-19 vaccination. My testimony, given right here in the Ohio State House in June 2021, led to a harrowing journey with the medical board, all because I exercised my First Amendment right to support a piece of vaccine choice legislation. They didn't suspend my license due to malpractice or wrongful doing. They claimed I "failed to cooperate" with an investigation, even though every letter was responded to by my lawyer. As a result, my license was wrongfully suspended for eight months.

How many doctors will forever be silenced or afraid to give testimony for medical freedom and health freedom legislation for fear their license will be reprimanded or worse, revoked? How many are willing to stand up against the media, smearing their name and reputation?

When will our representative government stand for our free medical speech and protect physicians who are willing to think for themselves?

Freedom of speech in America is dying, not just for health providers, but for every citizen who has a different opinion than what the mainstream media tells us to believe. And as the Ohio House has already done, this Senate committee can pass the legislation that will protect my rights and the rights of healthcare professionals across the state of Ohio to be able to express their opinions freely and treat their consenting patients without fear of retaliation.

Today, I implore you to dismantle the strongholds of hospital bureaucrats and pharmacists who overstepped their boundaries and dictated which drugs doctors could and can prescribe. It's crucial to restore to health providers their right to free medical speech and to ensure their patients' right to access the drugs their doctor prescribes. These drugs can be their lifeline.

Today, I urge the committee to vote Yes on Sub HB 73, Thank you.

Sincerely,



Dr. Sherri Tenpenny, DO
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