

Rebecca Spegele, MD
Testimony before Ohio Senate Health Committee
Sub. House Bill 73

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in opposition to Sub. House Bill 73.

My name is Rebecca Spegele and I am a pediatric physician and Ohio resident. As a pediatric healthcare provider, my primary focus is on keeping kids healthy and safe.

With each patient I see, multi-faceted teams are involved in ensuring that pediatric patients receive the best, but also the safest care possible. We have physicians on these teams, but also nurses, specialty doctors, pharmacists, social workers, care coordinators, and most importantly, parents and families, as they are experts in their children. In critical care scenarios or complex patients, there may be 30 people all working together to ensure each patient gets the best care. Before I can prescribe an antibiotic for a child with a bone infection for example, I have infectious disease specialists weighing in on what antibiotic will best target the most likely bacteria, a pharmacist looking at drug interactions with other medications and the safety of this medication for the patient's liver or kidneys, and nurses checking the dosage before administering the medication. Pediatric care is very different from medicine in adults; kids metabolize medications differently, have different pathologies, and their health in childhood will affect their quality of life for decades to come. We do not take this responsibility lightly, nor do we believe it to be safe that an outside provider, who is not held to the same standards as we are, could potentially override these safety measures we have in place. I am concerned that there will be unintended consequences of this bill that will lead to the harm or death of pediatric patients, while creating a business of medical providers who will "sell snake oil" to desperate families for the right price.

I am also concerned that this bill requires providers to be privileged in 5 days. In my experience becoming credentialed for my training, this is a process that takes months for background checks, talking to those who we have worked with in the past, ensuring our credentials are valid, and ensuring we have not faced any disciplinary action. Ohio holds its medical providers to a high standard and forcing a 5-day credentialing process will result in things being missed.

I have many concerns about this bill, including how an external provider without a full understanding of a patient's conditions could put patient's safety at risk by overriding the checks and balances our medical system has in place to ensure we do not cause harm. These will be providers who are not fully vetted and are not held to the same standards as our Ohio providers currently are.

I ask you to vote **against** HB 73 for these reasons.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Spegele, MD