

Jessica Thielen, APRN
Testimony before Ohio Senate Health Committee
Sub. House Bill 73
June 12, 2024

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 Jessica Thielen and I am a life-long Ohioan and an acute care pediatric nurse practitioner with 14 years of experience in a pediatric cardiac intensive care unit (CICU). As a pediatric nurse practitioner and a parent of two children, my life revolves around the health and safety of children.

In the pediatric CICU, we have extremely complex and critically ill patients. As an inpatient provider, I am the person most intimately aware of all my patients' medications, recommendations from other sub-specialty consults, and the severity and trajectory of their conditions. Each patient may have dozens of medications with numerous possible side effects or adverse reactions. Patients in the CICU have complex care that is carefully managed and overseen by an internal physician who specializes in cardiac intensive care and team of providers. We collaborate as a multidisciplinary team of experts to provide family-centered care, tailored to the needs of each child. Parents are valued members of the care team who are involved in rounds and care conferences.

Clinical pharmacists and registered nurses are essential and respected members of the care team who provide critically important double-checks of medications before they are administered to a patient. Pharmacists help to restrict medication usage during times of critical shortages, ensuring that the patients most in need can receive the medications that they need. For example, during recent shortages of essential benzodiazepine medications, our pharmacists ensured that supply was preserved for emergency use. Without their advocacy, a patient with life-threatening seizure activity might not have been able to get the medication they needed. In addition, they advocate for antibiotic stewardship, helping to minimize the creation of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Registered nurses check their patient's medication orders for safety and suitability for a patient's condition before administering them.

Sub. House Bill 73 eliminates the checks and balances of safe and effective medication use within a hospital. I am concerned that if it is enacted, an external prescriber without the full picture of the patient's health status could override the pediatric team's carefully developed plan, putting the patient at risk. By requiring hospital staff to administer a medication that the care team believes is not in the best interest of the patient, this bill puts pediatric patients at risk of harm.

I am asking you as a parent and medical professional who has dedicated my career to caring for some of the most complex and critically ill children in our state to oppose Sub. House Bill 73. Thank you for your time,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Thielen, APRN". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small dot above the 'i' in Thielen.

Jessica Thielen, MSN, APRN, CPNP-AC