



## Proponent Testimony for SB106

*SB106 protects Ohio's airborne healthcare professionals.*

Chairman Hackett, Vice Chair Lang, Ranking Member Craig, and Honorable members of the Ohio Senate Insurance committee,

My name is Anthony Caldwell and I have the pleasure of serving as the Director of Government Relations for the Ohio Nurses Association, the voice of Ohio's 180,000 Registered Nurses since 1904.

The Ohio Nurses Association is a strong community of union and non-union registered nurses who are dedicated to protecting and advancing the profession and impacting healthcare in Ohio.

First, I want to thank Senator Schaffer for sponsoring Senate Bill 106. Like Senator Schaffer, the members of the Ohio Nurses Association are concerned about the health, safety, and well-being of the medical staff who provide essential care on air ambulances throughout the State of Ohio.

Senate Bill 106 proposes a much-needed solution to the significant occupational hazards that healthcare professionals face while staffing air ambulances.

Nurses across the State of Ohio have witnessed the critical and life-saving care that is provided by air ambulance services. These services provide rapid transportation for critically ill or injured patients, often in rural areas where ground transportation may not be feasible. In such situations, time is of the essence, and every minute can make the difference between life and death.

However, we must also remember that the healthcare professionals who staff these air ambulances are often exposed to potentially life-threatening hazards during their work.

Exposure to blood or bodily fluids from patients, as well as exposure to drugs and other chemical substances, can pose a significant risk to their health and safety. These hazards can cause serious occupational diseases, which can have lifelong consequences for these healthcare professionals.

Senate Bill 106 recognizes this reality and proposes a much-needed solution. This bill would require the Administrator of Workers' Compensation or a self-insuring public employer to pay for services used to determine whether a health care professional staffing an air ambulance sustained an injury or occupational disease after exposure to another person's blood or bodily fluids or being exposed to a drug or other chemical substance.

In conclusion, the Ohio Nurses Association urges the members of the Ohio Senate Insurance committee to support Senate Bill 106.

This bill is crucial for the protection of healthcare professionals who work in air ambulance services. It will ensure that they receive prompt and appropriate medical attention if they are exposed to any hazardous substances during their work.

Senate Bill 106 will not only benefit the healthcare professionals but also the patients they serve. It will ensure that these professionals can continue to provide high-quality care to patients, without the fear of occupational diseases.

Thank you.