



**Rep. Meredith Craig**  
**77<sup>th</sup> Ohio House District**

**Rep. Kellie Deeter**  
**54<sup>th</sup> Ohio House District**

Chairman Johnson, Vice Chair Lear, Ranking Member McNally, and members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 277.

Representative Deeter and I are honored to present this critical workforce legislation, which seeks to bring clarity, flexibility, and opportunity to Ohio's network of health care professionals and the technology platforms that connect them with health care facilities in need.

HB 277 responds directly to the mounting pressures faced by the nursing profession and the broader health care workforce. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, our health care system was experiencing rising demand for skilled professionals, especially nurses. In the years since, staffing shortages, burnout, and an aging workforce have only intensified the challenges in hospitals, long-term care centers, and other health care facilities across the state.

HB 277 recognizes the evolving landscape of health care staffing, particularly the rise of electronic platforms that match qualified health care workers with temporary shift opportunities at health care facilities. These platforms help alleviate workforce shortages, increase access to care, and give health care professionals more control over when, where, and how they work.

HB 277 establishes a clear legal framework for the relationship between health care worker platforms and the professionals who use them. Specifically, it defines that, under certain conditions, health care workers utilizing these platforms are to be considered 1099 independent contractors, not employees, for purposes of Ohio law.

This is not an attempt to circumvent worker protections or undermine traditional employment. Rather, it reflects the reality of how these platforms operate: offering flexible, voluntary opportunities without imposing the obligations or control that characterize a traditional employer-employee relationship.

*Now, I'll turn it over to my joint sponsor, Representative Deeter, to provide further details.*

Under HB 277, a health care worker qualifies as an independent contractor if the platform meets certain criteria. This includes:

- The health care worker has no obligation to accept a minimum number of shifts.
- The health care worker can accept or reject shifts freely.

- The health care worker has no restrictions on working with other platforms or facilities.
- The health care platform cannot require noncompete agreements.
- The health care platform cannot issue penalties for declining work.
- The health care worker is responsible for all federal, state, and local taxes on their earnings through the health care platform.

HB 277 does not prohibit health care workers from pursuing employment arrangements if they choose to. Rather, it gives them the freedom to choose how they wish to engage with the health care system, whether through full-time employment, per diem shifts, or multiple platforms.

The health care model established in HB 277 provides consistency and legal certainty for both workers, the platforms, and the facilities using these shift-based opportunities. It encourages innovation in health care staffing while preserving worker autonomy.

HB 277 responds directly to the mounting pressures faced by the nursing profession and the broader health care workforce. Many highly qualified nursing professionals are leaving the traditional workforce not because they want to stop practicing, but because they need more control over their time, their schedule, or their working conditions. This bill empowers them to stay engaged in the field in a way that works for them, and helps Ohio retain skilled talent that might otherwise leave the profession altogether.

Chairman Johnson, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on HB 277 and we would be happy to answer any questions you may have.