

Testimony of Kenneth Lovins

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Good morning, Chair Ray, Vice Chair LaRe, Ranking Member Brent, and esteemed members of the House General Government Committee. My name is Kenneth Lovins, and I am a Medical Health Physicist for Unicon Medical Physics, based in the Cincinnati, Ohio area. I am also an Ohio Certified Radiation Expert (CRE), am board-certified by the American Board of Health Physics, and am a member of the American Association of Physicists in Medicine, the Health Physics Society and the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors.

In 1995, I met the qualifications and was approved by the Ohio Department of Health as a Qualified Radiation Expert and performed inspections on x-ray equipment. In the late 1990's that program was eliminated as Ohio hired their own x-ray inspectors. The Qualified Radiation Expert designation was removed and was replaced by the Certified Radiation Expert program to both oversee Quality Assurance Programs for hospitals and to perform required surveys and annual testing of most x-ray equipment at any facility utilizing medical radiation.

My path to obtaining the CRE credential was with a Master's degree and an appropriate amount of supervised work experience. The education and experience pathway has been an option since the CRE program started. With the planned elimination of the CRE program, the proposed revision to the definition of CRE permits only those persons who have attained board certification by the American Board of Radiology or the American Board of Medical Physics to be considered qualified and no longer contains the education and experience pathway.

Because of this change, all current CREs who were qualified via this pathway would be considered unqualified to do the work that they have been doing. This includes me and two other full-time physicists in our group, and approximately 1/3 of all Diagnostic and Mammography CREs. I have been a CRE in Ohio for over 25 years and find it extremely difficult to understand how I can be approved by the state of Ohio, obtain an additional 25 years of work experience, and then be told that I'm no longer qualified, despite no increase in requirements for this work.

In addition to removing many CREs, this closes the door for any future radiation experts who would have chosen this pathway. There was already a shortage of medical physicists before this legislation was drafted, and disqualifying 1/3 of them by removing this pathway will lead to increased shortages of radiation experts over time and higher costs for medical facilities and healthcare in general.

A simple solution would be to retain the education and experience pathway for being a radiation expert. If the CRE program is eliminated, a requirement could be put in place for the facilities to maintain documentation of the radiation expert's qualifications and continuing education and have

them available for state inspection. This would accomplish the goal of eliminating the CRE program and the regulation, while not affecting jobs, careers and patient care in medical facilities.

Thank you, Chair Ray, Vice Chair LaRe, Ranking Member Brent, and members of the Committee. I'd be happy to answer any questions at this time.



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