HB 353 Proponent Testimony
House Health Committee
Chair Jean Schmidt
October 22, 2025

Chair Schmidt, Vice Chair Deeter, Ranking Member Somani, and members of the House Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on HB 353. My name is Emily Keller, and I am a PA-C residing in Crestline, Ohio, in Richland County.

PAs are nationally certified, state licensed medical professionals that diagnose, treat, prescribe medications, and manage patient care in collaboration with the healthcare team. In Ohio, especially in more rural areas like where I am from, PAs are extremely advantageous in helping to extend the capabilities of physicians and healthcare organizations to treat patients who may not otherwise have access to care.

Supporting the title change from “physician assistant” to “physician associate” would help patients better understand our true role on the healthcare team. The title "physician assistant" is often misleading to patients.

I've frequently walked into a patient's room, introduced myself as a physician assistant, and been asked when the doctor is coming in. As I interact with the patient, they learn that I have the medical knowledge to prescribe, manage, diagnose, or treat their conditions. While this eases their concerns, the initial impression created by the title "physician assistant" is a setback and doesn't accurately reflect our level of medical training and responsibility.

The title "physician associate" more accurately describes our role as collaborative healthcare professionals working alongside physicians and other healthcare providers. I urge you to support this bill to strengthen healthcare in Ohio and ensure our state benefits fully from the significant contribution PAs make to patient care. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Keller, DMSc, PA-C