

To: Members of the Ohio House Health Committee

Fr: Monica Hueckel, Senior Director, Government Relations, Ohio State Medical Association

Da: November 27, 2018

Re: SB 259 – Revise physician assistant practice laws

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On behalf of the 16,000 physician, resident, and medical student members of the Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA), I am writing as an interested party to Senate Bill 259 which expands the scope of practice for physician assistants (PAs).

The version of the bill before the committee now for consideration comes as a result of significant collaborative efforts between the sponsor, proponents, and other interested parties. When SB 259 was introduced, the OSMA and other interested parties met with the sponsor and the PAs to discuss the changes it would make to current PA practice laws. While we had no objections to many of the changes in the proposal, we did express a few concerns about a handful of provisions of the bill. We appreciate the willingness of the sponsor and proponents to consider our concerns, as well as the resulting amendments to the legislation that were accepted in the Senate. With these issues addressed, the OSMA was able to take a position of neutrality on SB 259.

This committee debates several scope of practice issues and all members know OSMA is committed to evaluating these proposals through collaborative discussion between all involved parties. We share a common goal of continuing to deliver high quality patient care in Ohio. During the legislative process, concerns may arise about the implications of scope of practice changes, and through cooperative efforts to address these concerns, we avoid safety risks and other negative impacts upon patients. In addition, legislative proposals are revised to contain more robust, tangible patient care solutions.

This exact process has enabled SB 259 to progress through legislative proceedings fairly smoothly and efficiently, and the OSMA commends the sponsor for guiding SB 259 through the essential steps of this deliberative, thoughtful and effective approach to scope of practice legislation. We also thank the proponents for the continuous open dialogue and believe this legislation is going to benefit patients in Ohio, which is always the ultimate goal.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments on this legislation and please contact the OSMA should you have any questions.