



## State Representative Rick Carfagna

*Sponsor Testimony - House Bill 151*

*May 7, 2019*

Chairman Merrin, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Member Boyd, and members of the House Health Committee. Thank you for affording me the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 151. This legislation creates the Ohio Chiropractic Loan Repayment Program, with the goal of increasing chiropractic care to underserved communities and populations. Chiropractic physicians specialize in spinal care, neuromuscular care and/or nervous system function, providing non-surgical and non-pharmacological pain treatments. Chiropractic care is one of the most effective, safest, and yet underutilized assets in healthcare. Today, there are more than 70,000 active chiropractic licenses in the United States, with 2,552 licensed Doctors of Chiropractic in Ohio.

The proposed program under HB 151 mirrors the existing Ohio Physician Loan Repayment Program and the Ohio Dentist and Dental Hygienist Loan Repayment Programs. Under the program, in exchange for loan repayment assistance, Doctors of Chiropractic commit to providing chiropractic services in a designated chiropractic health resource shortage area for a minimum of two years and see patients regardless of their ability to pay. Selected applicants may receive up to \$10,000 annually for repayment of outstanding chiropractic school debt.

This program will be administered by the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), and funded by the Ohio Chiropractic Licensing Board licensees through non-GRF funds. **To be clear, this initiative would be 100% industry-funded, with no taxpayer dollars supporting this loan program.** Under ODH, a chiropractic loan repayment advisory board will be created consisting of the following members: one member of the Ohio House, one member of the Ohio Senate, a representative from the Ohio Department of Higher Education, the director of ODH or a designated employee, and three representatives of the chiropractic profession appointed by the Governor after consultation with the Ohio State Chiropractic Association. The advisory board will meet at least once annually, and will determine the loan repayment amounts, which are not to exceed \$10,000. The advisory board will also submit an annual report to the Governor and legislature detailing the operations of the program, number of requests, the areas designated as shortage areas, the number of chiropractors assigned to those areas and the payments made, and any outstanding obligations.

Additionally, this legislation seeks to make minor changes to the operation of the Ohio Chiropractic Licensing Board, including: allowing the majority of the board to set its annual meeting, setting the election of the board president at the first meeting of the board held in each odd-numbered year, and changing from one year to two years the expiration of a Doctor of Chiropractic's acupuncture certificate.

Chairman Merrin and members of this committee, thank you again for allowing me to provide testimony and at this time, I would be happy to answer any questions.