



The Ohio House of Representatives
House State & Local Government Committee
Representative Scott Wiggam, Chair

HOUSE BILL 6
PROPONENT WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Chair Wiggam, Vice-Chair John, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the House State & Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of House Bill 6 (“HB 6”), which continues the suspension of the requirement that an applicant pass a licensure examination to receive a license to practice as a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse and adds eligibility limitations until July 1, 2021. HB 6 specifies that a nursing license issued without examination is valid until July 1, 2021, unless the licensee fails the licensing examination, is convicted of a felony, or fails a drug test. Under current law, a temporary nursing license issued without examination is only valid through March 1, 2021.

University Hospitals is a Cleveland-based super-regional health system that serves more than 1.2 million patients in 15 Northeast Ohio counties. The hub of our 19-hospital system is University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center, a 1,032-bed academic medical center that encompasses UH Rainbow Babies & Children’s Hospital; UH Seidman Cancer Center; and a medical-surgical complex boasting world-renowned excellence in every specialty. University Hospitals strives to strengthen the health care needs of our community by providing outstanding service, the highest quality physicians and nurses, and using innovative techniques.

As the pandemic continues into 2021, healthcare systems continue to face staffing and workforce challenges. HB 6 helps to alleviate strains and potential burn out felt by nursing staff. It allows hospital systems in Ohio, like University Hospitals, to continue to support our nursing staff by avoiding delays in their ability to safely practice.

Nurse staffing is critical to providing essential and lifesaving care to Ohioans. HB 6 would expand the availability of temporary “emergency license” for nurses through July 1, 2021. Allowing this extra time for currently employed nurses and new nursing school graduates to utilize a temporary “emergency license” alleviates staffing challenges, especially as we are also heavily involved in administering vaccinations to our local community.

We urge you to support HB 6 and to help ensure that Ohio supports its healthcare systems and its frontline workers. HB 6 would continue to alleviate challenges among our frontline workers, one of the major issues created by the pandemic, by simply extending previously passed legislation.

Thank you Chair Wiggam, Vice-Chair John, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the House State & Local Government Committee for this opportunity to provide feedback on this important legislation.

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