

February 3, 2021

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Ohio Senate Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 7.

UC Health is an integrated academic health system serving the Greater Cincinnati region. In partnership with the University of Cincinnati, UC Health combines clinical expertise and compassion with research and teaching – offering patients options for even the most complex situations.

The Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact included in SB 7 would allow for occupational therapists licensed in one state to practice in another member state. UC Health serves many patients in the tristate area, including Indiana and Kentucky. Permitting our occupational therapists and occupational therapist assistants to practice within other compact states will increase patient access to health care. With the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact being recently finalized, to date, no states have ratified this compact. Ten states must act to support the compact for these agreements to become effective. We support SB 7 so Ohio can be a leader of this important national policy reform.

In addition to increasing health care access through SB 7, Ohio could improve patient care by attracting out-of-state talent to move to Ohio and practice occupational therapy. During recent interviews conducted with potential occupational therapists at UC Health, licensure requirements have been a large item of focus. If SB 7 were to be enacted, UC Health could hire qualified occupational therapists from other states without the occupational therapist needing to apply through Ohio's licensing requirements.

The Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact includes many safeguards to protect patients from occupational therapists or occupational therapist assistants who have negative comments on their licenses. For example, if there are any limitations on a clinician's license in their home state, that licensee cannot practice in any remote state until the home state lifts the limitation on the license and two years have passed since the adverse action against the licensee.

UC Health greatly appreciates Senator Roegner's leadership on this issue, and we strongly support Senate Bill 7.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 7. Please contact me at any time if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

Candace Sabers
Vice President, Government Relations