



November 27, 2017

The Honorable Steve Huffman
Chair, House Health Committee
77 S. High Street, 12th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Re: House Bill 131 – Physical Therapy

Dear Chairman Huffman:

As the Past President of the Academy of Medicine of Cleveland & Northern Ohio (AMCNO), an organization representing more than 5,000 physicians in the Northern Ohio region, and as a practicing orthopedic surgeon in the Cleveland area, I am writing to you on behalf of the AMCNO to express our opposition of HB 131 - legislation that modifies the scope of practice of a physical therapist.

The AMCNO is concerned with this bill because it would grant physical therapists the ability to diagnose a medical condition – which in effect gives them the ability to independently practice medicine. Medical decision-making and diagnoses are the result of the interpretation of many variables including, history, examination, and diagnostics. While we agree that physical therapists are an important part of the healthcare team, they are not adequately trained to diagnose a medical condition. We believe that the diagnosis of medical conditions should be done by trained physicians or mid-level providers who are working collaboratively with a physician.

In addition, the bill would permit a PT to order plain X-rays, but only if the PT meets certain educational requirements as outlined in the bill. The AMCNO believes that there are some very real patient safety concerns when a PT orders imaging - mainly because the imaging education and training of a PT, even in PT doctorate programs, will not be sufficient enough for them to provide these services on their own.

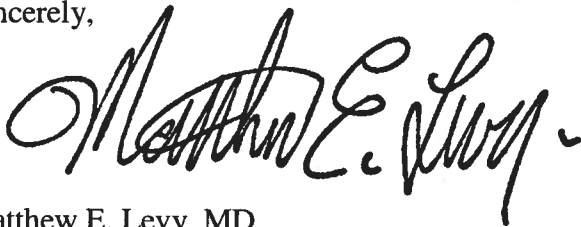
There is an alternative proposal that could potentially allow a PT to order X-rays, namely to attain adequate training in imaging **and** enter into a formal collaboration arrangement with a physician, similar to how APRNs and PAs do under their existing scopes of practice. At this time, there is only one other state that authorizes a PT to order images, so even if the collaborative approach were to move forward, Ohio would be an outlier state relative to this authorization.

The Voice of Physicians in Northern Ohio

Proponents of this legislation have opined that the major purpose of this bill was to have better avenues for PTs to bill health insurers for PT services. If in fact this is the case, we believe this could easily be accomplished through a collaboration arrangement with a physician.

In conclusion, the Academy of Medicine of Cleveland & Northern Ohio is very concerned about this bill and we wanted to be sure that the committee was aware of our position on HB 131.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew E. Levy, MD". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Matthew E. Levy, MD

Past President

Cc: Members of the Ohio House Health Committee