



Ohio House Health Committee
May 24, 2022
HB 28 Opponent Testimony

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Liston, thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to House Bill 28.

My name is Christopher Stawasz. I am paramedic and the Northeast Regional Director of Government Affairs at Global Medical Response. GMR is the largest medical transportation provider in the United States employing over 38,000 people operating over 7,000 ground ambulances and nearly 400 aircraft across the country including a large presence here in Ohio. Here in Ohio, we have ground ambulance operations in Akron, Youngstown & Dayton operating as AMR. Our air operations in Ohio are in Akron, Licking County, Lancaster, Brown County and Portsmouth operating as Air Evac Life.

I have worked in the medical transportation industry and been a licensed paramedic for 38 years. I wanted to express my profound concerns with House Bill 28 and the impact it will have on patient safety.

HB28 creates a new level of service called stretcher van to transport individuals who must be transported in a prone position on a stretcher. These individuals may currently be transported by ambulance. Ambulances are specifically designed to transport an individual on a stretcher and to secure the stretcher in the ambulance, our staff is trained in how to safely load patients on to a stretcher and secure it. Additionally, the substitute bill carves out hospice and nursing homes from having to abide by any licensure or regulation when it comes to transporting this category of patients.

After discussion between leaders with medical and nursing backgrounds, the private and public medical transportation industry and the hospice industry representatives through the Department of Public Safety Division of EMS Emergency Medical Transportation going back to 2018, the Department of Public Safety which regulates medical transportation promulgated rules that provide reduced staffing and reduced equipment requirements to transport stretcher patients in an ambulance. HB138 which just received unanimous concurrence in the House on the March 23rd was amended to codify the reduced staffing levels for these transports. The regulatory framework that was passed by the General Assembly and will take effect in July addresses the gaps in patient safety this bill would create while still leaving a level playing field for any provider that wishes to engage in the transport of these vulnerable populations.

Thank you for allowing me to submit this testimony. Our industry has been uniquely impacted by the pandemic and this bill would have additional devastating impacts on care delivery and potentially endanger the patients to whom we have been licensed and entrusted to provide services. I would be happy to answer any questions you have and thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Christopher Stawasz