



State Senator Mark Romanchuk  
Senate Bill 81 Sponsor Testimony  
Ohio Senate Health Committee  
September 20, 2023

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio, and committee members. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Substitute Senate Bill 81 which will allow hospital-based advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) and physician assistants (PAs), in accordance with a standard care arrangement (SCA) entered into with a physician, to sign certain documents necessary to process patients within the facility where current law requires a physician signature.

I brought this legislation forward because it eliminates a barrier to entry for mental healthcare at the moment when the need is at its highest. Ohio is experiencing a shortage of qualified behavioral health workers, including an acute shortage of psychiatrists. According to the Association of American Medical Colleges, we are not on track to replace current psychiatrists as they retire.

Under this bill, APRNs and PAs could sign documents such as intake, treatment orders, and discharge orders only for in-patient behavioral health services. In Sub SB 81, there is language which shields Physicians who the SCA from licensure penalty, criminal, and civil liabilities, if the APRN or PA signature was determined to cause patient harm.

It should also be noted that the Ohio State Medical Association and the Ohio Hospital Association are neutral.

Thank you for your attention today and your support of this legislation. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.