

Chair Huffman, Vice-Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Health Committee, my name is Laura Knisley and I am writing to encourage your support for Senate Bill 196, which addresses the issue of Global Signature Authority for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs). As a constituent residing in Senator Bob Hackett's district 10, I want to highlight the significance of this proposed legislation and its potential positive impact on both my profession and the patients we serve.

As an APRN, I have undergone extensive education at the doctoral level, obtained national board certification, and possess the expertise to diagnose, treat, and manage patients. APRNs serve as trusted healthcare partners, providing compassionate, patient-centered care that addresses the full spectrum of acute and chronic conditions. A major obstacle in the delivery of care is the restriction placed on APRNs regarding the signing of health-related forms for our patients. Granting APRNs signing authority would enhance patient care delivery by reducing regulatory burden through streamlining paperwork processes, eliminating the duplication of services, and removing unnecessary delays in care. Additionally, the proposed global signature authority aligns with our existing scope of practice. Here are some examples of areas where APRN signature recognition would be beneficial:

- Certification of disability for obtaining disabled parking placards.
- Conducting sports physicals for student-athletes. Administering pre-employment and health screening exams.
- Signing Patient Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) and other end-of-life care documents.
- Signing vital statistics documents.
- Completing workers' compensation forms for employees injured on the job.
- Providing documentation of a patient's health needs for emergency utilities.

Allow me to illustrate how the current inability to sign forms has adversely affected my patients:

In the State of Ohio, I cannot sign the insulin exemption form for school bus drivers, even though I performed the exam. I manage that patient's diabetes, prescribe and adjust their medications, and perform the required exam. However, my collaborating physician who has never seen or been involved with any aspect of the patient's care has to put his signature on the form—all for my patient to keep their job---. Please keep in mind, I do sign the national diabetes insulin exemption form for their CDL, without the requirement of a signature from my collaborating physician. Under the current law, the time and energy of myself, my patient, and my collaborating physician are wasted, all for a signature for care that I have provided. It is also important to note that the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration does not require the extra step of getting the signature of a physician after all care has been performed by an APRN.

Depending on the provider, this barrier increases medical costs for the patient to get the extra signature, delays care waiting on a signature, and potentially puts the patient's job at risk, as the forms are time-sensitive. It does not make sense that I, as the provider performing the exam, managing their chronic disease and being familiar with my patient, cannot sign a form verifying that my patient is on insulin, in the State of Ohio.

I urge you to support SB 196 for the betterment of healthcare delivery in our state. Thank you for considering my testimony in support of SB196. Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

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