

**Testimony to Health Human Service Committee
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Walt Disney said “It’s kind of fun to do the impossible” and if you sit on this committee then you understand what Walt was saying and the issues we are facing in healthcare today and here in Kansas, with declining reimbursements, an ever growing and aging population, large numbers of under or uninsured. While it feels overwhelming it is certainly not impossible, though it will require forward thinking of this committee to figure out how to solve the healthcare crisis. I have been in this business for over 20 years and I can attest that we have entered into one of the most volatile eras of healthcare today.

One of the greatest concerns facing Americans today is a lack of primary care providers (PCP). By 2025 there will be a 45,000 healthcare deficit of PCPs and Kansas is not immune to this deficit. The question often asked but remaining unresolved is, “how can we reduce these disparities and those in rural Kansas?” I stand before you ready to serve. We are “The Land of Opportunity” and there is no better time than today for nurse practitioners to seize that opportunity and take part in bridging the gap in healthcare, while participating in a rich tradition of small business opportunities. That’s just what my partner and I did when we opened our clinic.

We are one of the first NP owned and managed family and urgent care clinics in Johnson County, where prevention meets urgent care. After years of working in the emergency room (ER) and taking care of a large volumes of patients inundating our ER system for less than emergent care issues, my business partner and I thought we needed to do something about it. We needed to put our money where our mouth was because we knew what it meant for a patient to be seen in the ER. A patient could not get out for less than a thousand dollars but we knew if we just had the opportunity to see them in the office, it would be less than 120 dollars.

The Institute of Medicine stated that nurses of all levels needed to be allowed to practice to the height of their licensure and not be restricted by barriers. Despite the weight of these barriers my partner and I have somehow found our way through. Although not easy on a daily basis we knew how important it was for us to follow our dreams. To really show what nurse practitioners can do to bridge the gap in healthcare and improve access, I invite you to visit our clinic and see firsthand what NPs can do? Nurse practitioners are highly competent and capable candidates to get this job done for us in Kansas.

I am the new face of healthcare today. I am a small business owner and entrepreneur offering the citizens of Kansas an alternative option in healthcare. We no longer can accept or continue to work off the current physician driven model of, “what we knew is what we know, is what we do.” It’s not working and it has not been working. There is a place in healthcare for everyone. We need all hands on deck. And team based approach to care does not always mean physician led.

My clinic is committed to providing high quality, cost effective healthcare. We are a nurse owned and led practice boasting over 2000 patients since its inception four years ago. In my small for profit business I take care of the insured, under or uninsured, small business owners and those with Medicare and Medicaid.

I generate revenue for other businesses, pay taxes and provide jobs for Kansans. I refer to over 20 various physician group practices, several allied health and nursing care clinics. That's 20 physician groups happy to take my phone call, happy to see my patient and more than willing to send them back. And that's because they know I generate revenue for them. My referrals generate thousands of dollars and grows business in Kansas.

My company should be the litmus test for proving that nurse practitioners in practice and business can lend hope in reducing disparities in the healthcare market place today. And if I can do it in large suburbia can you imagine what nurse practitioners could do in those counties with less opportunity for healthcare providers.

FTC suggested to you that competition in health care services leads to better outcomes for consumers. It controls cost and improves quality of care and promotes innovative practices, services and delivery models while expanding access. Laws can impose unnecessary or unintended restrictions depriving consumers the benefits of competition. You have heard that we require higher education and training of ourselves. We demand much of ourselves as we are the future of healthcare if granted the opportunity to fly such as we have. We must remove barriers and look to creative measures to care for the next generation. "What we knew" does not have to be what we do.