

I am Rae Lyn Mefford. I am a doctor of nursing practice with 15 years of experience as a family nurse practitioner. I have 9.5 years of college and nearly 40,000 clinical practice hours. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to explain the importance of supporting SB 69.

Even in large metropolitan areas there are thousands of patients without access to care. Fewer physicians accept patients with Medicare and Medicaid even as that population continues to grow. We have an enormous population of elderly and disabled patients, who have great difficulty getting out of their homes. Many are even bedbound and only able to leave by ambulance and stretcher. This population has the greatest use of emergency rooms and hospitals for routine care.

Four years ago I won \$10,000 as first place prize in a statewide business plan competition and used it as seed money to start Advanced Mobile Healthcare. We provide "Old Fashioned Primary Care House Calls" to the homebound population. I currently have 10 employees and we have 5 APRNs in our practice. Not only are we improving access to care through our innovative healthcare delivery model, but we are also reducing overall healthcare spending by reducing unnecessary emergency room visits and hospitalizations.

Running a small business is difficult enough in today's society without unnecessary barriers such as mandatory physician collaboration. This is the second APRN practice I have owned and it is extremely difficult to find a collaborating physician, and it will become even more difficult as many private practices are being acquired by large groups and hospitals. Thus far, I've had one collaborating physician move out of state, another died unexpectedly, and another took a different job that restricted his other activities. Each time I lost a collaborating physician, I was at risk of losing my business and leaving hundreds of patients without access to care. The thousands of dollars I must pay for a collaborating physician is not my concern here. My concern is making sure my patients have the care they need.

By supporting SB 69 and removing the mandatory collaborating physician language, we will open the door for more APRN owned innovative healthcare business solutions to help provide jobs, create competition in the healthcare market, and help improve the overall economy in Kansas. Thanks again for allowing me to speak in support of SB 69.