

Date February 2, 2019

Chairman Landwehr and committee members,

I am Holly Cobb and I am a Family Nurse Practitioner, co-founder and co-owner of Oasis Family Medicine Associates, a primary care clinic in Topeka.

HB 2066 is needed to accurately reflect the current state of health care in Kansas. Nurse practitioners total over 3,000 and provide care to Kansan's throughout our state.

Currently, a written agreement by a physician is required for a nurse practitioner to be allowed to practice in Kansas. This requirement is a barrier and does not reflect the skill, education, and ability of our profession.

There are hundreds of studies comparing outcomes of nurse practitioners to physicians, and outcomes are consistently the same, or better. These studies have been steadily increasing since the 1970's, the inception of the profession and are truly overwhelming in evidence. The studies I cite span across numerous areas of treatment; high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, admission and treatment rates, prescribing habits, and overall health outcomes.

The written agreement that is required by Kansas law perpetuates the idea nurse practitioners need to be led by physicians to provide safe care - this is false. It is important to understand that a primary care nurse practitioner and physician have taken a different path to a very similar role.

The cost of primary care provided by NPs is lower than primary care physicians for the same services. Medicare reimburses nurse practitioners at 85% the rate of physicians and private payers pay NP's less than physicians. Nurse practitioners earn about 50% of what a primary care physician earns. The economic value of nurse practitioners is one of few bright spots in our current healthcare economy.

An AEI 2016 study found that State's with nurse practitioner scope-of-practice restrictions, like Kansas, do not protect the public from subpar care. The restrictions do, however, make Kansas a less desirable place for nurse practitioners to practice.

HB 2066 would benefit our state and allow greater access to care, decreased health care costs and a level playing field for nurse practitioners and Kansas citizens. This committee is encouraged to pass HB 2066 and join the other 23 states that already have, including our neighbors Nebraska and Colorado.

I appreciate your time and attention. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

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