



Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 174

Presented by Eric Stafford, Vice President of Government Affairs

Thursday, February 18, 2021

Mister Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Eric Stafford, Vice President of Government Affairs for the Kansas Chamber. The Kansas Chamber represents small, medium and large businesses of all industry segments across the state.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 174, which would allow for the independent practice of medicine by APRN's. SB 174 does NOT change the scope of practice of these trained health care professionals. In a letter from the FTC to House Majority Leader Dan Hawkins, they said it best- "But even well-intentioned laws and regulations may include unnecessary or overbroad restrictions that limit competition."

We consistently advocate for a strong regulatory climate in Kansas that promotes a healthy business environment and instills regulatory certainty without limiting competition. Burdensome and unnecessary state regulations not only stifles business growth, and in this case, it also restricts healthcare professionals from practicing to their full scope of training and certification, and results in limiting access to affordable, high quality healthcare for our state's residents.

SB 174 aims to allow dedicated, highly trained medical professionals to practice to the scope for which they are trained and certified, while helping address both the professional shortage and rising cost of healthcare. SB 174 requires a transition to practice, as graduates must accrue 4,000 hours under a collaborative practice agreement with a physician. Once the individual reaches the 4,000 hours, the requirement for a collaborative agreement goes away.

As our state faces a shortage of health care providers, we must ensure state laws and regulations do not serve as a barrier to access. The FTC states "The competitive impact of unnecessary APRN regulations is concerning in light of evidence that independent practice—including independent prescribing—by APRN's might offer substantial benefits to Kansas health care consumers."

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 174. We respectfully ask for your support, and I am happy to answer questions at the appropriate time.