

# Public Policy Committee

## GREATER LEHIGH VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

January 21, 2019

Dear Representative

As the largest regional business organization in Pennsylvania, we take our responsibility of expressing the views of our 5,000+ members, 95% of whom are small businesses, quite seriously.

Business and non-profit members call Chamber staff on a regular basis to share how they are struggling to manage healthcare/insurance costs. We know that you know this, as you have heard from many of these businesses as well.

As we continue to look for ways to assist our members in this area, certain legislation has come to our attention that has the potential to play a significant role in reducing health care costs: In the 2017-18 session, the legislation was assigned PA Senate Bill 25 and its House companion, House Bill 100, each of which amends the Professional Nursing Law of 1951. SB 25 was passed on a bipartisan vote in April 2017 but did not get through the House. It is our understanding that HB 100 will be re-introduced this legislative session.

These bills present an opportunity for nurse practitioners to practice to the fullest extent of their education and ability, improve access to quality healthcare, and lower costs by a material amount, thus helping PA businesses and residents.

Nurse practitioners are educated and trained to serve patients as high-quality, cost-effective primary-care providers, but Pennsylvania law makes it unnecessarily complicated and expensive. The requirement that nurse practitioners have a costly and redundant business agreement with a physician is obsolete and hobbles our state's health care system. It drives up costs for consumers and creates an unnecessary professional and financial burden to practice in Pennsylvania, while also reducing access to qualified primary-care providers.

This is especially true for rural Pennsylvanians, who often have fewer health care options. If we remove unnecessary legal barriers, nurse practitioners would be able to better serve people with accessible, quality health care.

According to a study by Duke University, providing Full Practice Authority (FPA) to nurse practitioners would lead to a savings of \$6.4 billion on the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania over the next ten years. If the general medical examination and well-baby visit categories are included as well, that would increase the estimated savings to \$12.7 billion over a ten year period.

The Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce urges you and all members of our delegation to please consider the benefits this legislation would have to our member businesses, and all businesses across the Commonwealth, when considering voting for this legislation. Businesses

want to continue providing health insurance options to employees. To continue to do so, we have to find ways to alleviate the tremendous cost burden. This can play a part.

We are hopeful that this legislation will provide a wider range of quality healthcare while saving Pennsylvanians billions of dollars over the next decade.

If you would like to discuss this matter, please feel free to call one of us or The Chamber's Michelle Griffin Young, EVP Public Policy, at (610) 739-1514.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



John M. Hayes  
Chair, Public Policy Committee  
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