



HB 96 Interested Party Testimony
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Ohio Association of Physician Assistants (OAPA)
Senate Government Oversight & Reform Committee
Chair Susan Manchester
May 14, 2025

Chair Manchester, Vice Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Weinstein, and members of the Senate Government Oversight & Reform Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify as an interested party on HB 96 the biennial budget. My name is Melissa Bowlby, and I am a Past President and Government Affairs Committee member of the Ohio Association of Physician Assistants (OAPA). For more than 50 years, OAPA has promoted quality, accessible, and cost-effective patient care in Ohio through supporting and advancing the PA profession. More than 6,000 licensed PAs in Ohio are critical members of healthcare teams, providing lifesaving and life-enhancing care to their patients. We are testifying today in support of a tax credit to incentivize physicians, APRN's and PA's to serve as preceptors for students in medical and nursing programs to mentor the next generation of healthcare providers.

So what is a preceptor? A current health care provider to assist students in their learning in the clinical setting after completing didactic instruction. PA students rely on preceptors, who are experienced healthcare professionals providing supervision, instruction, and mentorship to help students apply their learning in a real-world clinical environment. With such a large population of PA students and learners in the state who need several thousand clinical rotations annually, every student needs a preceptor. PA programs are required to provide specific clinical placements, and I can attest to the continuous challenge in finding sufficient suitable clinical rotation placements with preceptors for students. In fact, some programs have closed or decreased enrollment below what accreditation permits, simply due to the perennial preceptor shortage. With Ohio's shortage of preceptors, students oftentimes are training out of state which can lead to employment elsewhere. This clearly shows we need to incentivize more preceptors in the state of Ohio.

OAPA is proposing a preceptor tax credit amendment to the state budget to provide a \$1,000 non-refundable tax credit to physicians, APRN's, and PA's that serve a minimum of three preceptorships in a calendar year. Taking on students for clinical rotations is rewarding, but also time consuming and a burden beyond the already difficult work of providing patient care. Ohio lawmakers can show their support to those who are educating the healthcare workforce of tomorrow by adopting this common sense, modest preceptor tax credit. These incentives aim to encourage experienced professionals to mentor the next generation of healthcare providers, thereby enhancing clinical training opportunities and helping to address workforce shortages.

We are proud to join with our physician and advanced practice registered nurse colleagues to ensure that preceptors of those professions are also included in this tax incentive, as it takes a village to educate the next generation of top-tier providers who will support improved health here in Ohio.

Once again, Chair Manchester and members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today on this important proposal. I will be happy to answer any questions at this time.