

Candidate Questions

Sean O'Brien, State Senate District 32

1) Ohioans receive the best health care when physicians serve as the leader in a team approach to medicine. Physicians are trained and licensed to provide comprehensive patient assessment and diagnosis and may order x-rays, chest scans, perform surgeries, and have full prescriptive authority. Physician extenders such as physician assistants, advanced practice registered nurses, physical therapists, and other providers have less education and training than physicians. However, organizations and lobbyists supporting physician extenders often pursue legislation granting access to patients that reach beyond their education and training, endangering patient care.

Would you support legislation that extends the scope of practice rights for physician extenders that would allow them to evaluate, test and treat patients without physician supervision? No

Comments: Nurses and PAs serve a need, but only Doctors have the medical training necessary to effectively treat their patients

2) HB 177, which would remove the collaboration agreement between APRNs (advanced practice registered nurses) and physicians, is being considered in the House Health Committee. The bill effectively allows independent practice authority for APRNs. Unfortunately, HB 177 jeopardizes optimum care by circumventing the physician-led, team-based approach.

Would you support or oppose HB 177? Oppose

Comments: As an attorney, I can give the analogy of using paralegals to write writs and other legal documents. No matter how talented they may be, they still need an attorney to read over their work to make certain it is up to standard. I view the medical profession in the same light.

3) Medicaid providers care for those most in need of health care services. The state's Medicaid system has endured fluctuating federal funding the last several years. Far too often, budget savings are proposed through cuts to Medicaid provider rates. These huge cuts would restrict access to health care for those who cannot seek treatment elsewhere.

As a legislator, would you support or oppose Medicaid provider rate cuts? Oppose

Comments: In order to attract top quality physicians, and this holds true in any profession, you must pay them accordingly.

4) As our state continues to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic, do you support the following to help slow the spread of the virus?

- Masks/facial coverings: Yes
- Physical/social distancing: Yes
- Limited indoor gatherings: Yes
- A CDC-approved vaccine: Yes

5) Generally, do you support vaccines and immunizations as a way of preventing disease? (Examples: Hepatitis B, measles/mumps/rubella, polio, etc.) Yes

Comments: Contrary to what the conspiracy theorists would have us believe, immunizations have been proven to be safe and effective.

6) The Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine (OU-HCOM) is the state's largest medical school. OU-HCOM now graduates 1,000 osteopathic physicians every four years. Further, OU-HCOM consistently maintains the highest in-state residency program match rate of the seven medical schools in Ohio. Now more than ever, osteopathic physicians are providing and benefiting health care throughout the state.

To that end, will you protect state funding for OU-HCOM as a means to benefit health access and provide quality health care in Ohio? Yes

Comments: We cannot afford to let our physicians leave the state to practice medicine elsewhere when they are badly needed here in Ohio. OU-HCOM seems to help fill that void.

**7) Do you know a DO? If so, who are they and how are you connected to them?
I can't honestly say one way or the other**