

Candidate Questions

Emilia Sykes, State Representative District 34

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: In the past I have supported expanding the scope of practice only when it includes appropriate physician supervision. HB 224 which expanded the scope of practice for certified registered nurse anesthetists passed the Ohio House unanimously after reaching compromise with all parties.

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? Support

Comments: I support allowing trained health care professionals practice at the highest level of their licenses. Further access to healthcare especially in areas where there are provider shortages requires solutions to add capacity for caregiving. HB 177 provides a solution to this issue. As with many scope of practice bills I am confident that all parties will be able to come together and find a path forward that provides optimal care and access to the healthcare system

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: With the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, I would not support any cuts to Medicaid including provider rates.

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:

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:

**7) Do you know a DO? If so, who are they and how are you connected to them?
My primary care physician is a D.O.**