



January 20th, 2026
Senate Committee on Health and Welfare

Dear Chair Lyons, Voce-Chair Gulick, and all distinguished members of the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare:

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on practice authority for advanced practice registered nurses in patient care within hospital settings (S 163). My name is Alicia Plemmons, PhD, and I am the Director of the Knee Regulatory Research Center at West Virginia University. This comment is not submitted on behalf of any party or interest group.

My research studies patient outcomes in terms of safety, quality, cost, and access under different prescriptive and practice authority expansions. We have repeatedly found in our data that APRNs are a critical part of patient care both within and outside hospital settings. Similar APRN policies in other states have resulted in:

1. Increased diversity and representation in healthcare for marginalized communities, resulting in greater cultural competence, adherence to medications, and use of preventative care.¹
2. Reductions in 30-day readmission resulting in overnight hospital stays or emergency room visits, as more primary care services are utilized.²
3. Increased rates of nurse practitioners moving into the state with full practice authority and a reduction of nurse practitioners leaving the state due to lack of job autonomy.³
4. Reductions in healthcare amenable deaths, with the largest reductions in rural areas.⁴

Allowing nurse practitioners and other advanced practice registered nurses to practice independently in hospital settings, directly in patient care, and to the fullest extent of their training, is a pathway the research finds to be effective in addressing care deficits without endangering the safety and quality of care provided to patients.

In summary, the proposed expansion of independent practice authority for advanced practice registered nurses represents an improvement for access to healthcare for the great residents of Vermont.

Best regards,

¹ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36482692/>

² <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13504851.2021.1980486>

³ <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12122-020-09308-1>

⁴ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S004727272300083X>

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