

January 31, 2020

The Honorable David Hickernell  
Chairman, House Professional Licensure Committee  
43A East Wing  
PO Box 202098  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2098

**RE: Letter of support for independent practice by certified Nurse Practitioners**

Dear Mr. Hickernell:

As an active physician of 50 years, I am writing in support of full, independent practice for Nurse Practitioners throughout the United States and specifically Pennsylvania. It has been my privilege over the years not only to work alongside my Nurse Practitioner colleagues, but also to closely observe the academic foundations of their education and training.

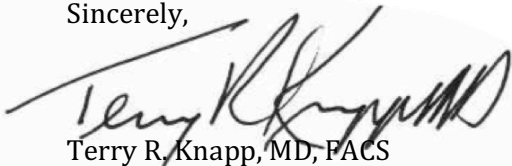
As with every other true healthcare professional, Nurse Practitioners are trained to recognize the limits of their individual capabilities and the constraints of their licensure—and to practice within a legal, moral and ethical scope of practice. Unfortunately, many Nurse Practitioners find themselves in circumstances in which they are underutilized due to outdated regulatory constraints. This is particularly unfortunate when, according to the U.S. government, more than 79 million Americans live in primary care professional shortage areas and another 115 million Americans live in mental/behavioral health professional shortage areas.

Further, when quality of care delivery is examined among primary care Nurse Practitioners in comparison to primary care delivered by MD family and general medical practitioners, the care delivered is equal or sometimes better. The data support independent practice for Nurse Practitioners.

The pressing need for increased access to good primary care for Americans, the state medical and nursing Boards with oversight and enforcement capabilities, and an underutilized population of highly trained and capable care providers—Nurse Practitioners—should make a legislative decision an easy one. Moreover, the 23 States and District of Columbia that have a history of extending full practice authority to Nurse Practitioners have experienced only positive results on the behalf of their respective citizenries.

As a medical doctor, I implore you to open access to care for more of your people in need. Nurse Practitioners will accommodate that need.

Sincerely,



Terry R. Knapp, MD, FACS  
Chairman and Chief Medical Officer

C: Honorable Harry Readshaw, Democratic Chair, House Professional Licensure Committee  
Margaret Pearl, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Coalition of Nurse Practitioners  
Lorraine Bock, DNP, ENP-C, FNP-C, FAANP, Carlisle, PA