



*Written Testimony Submitted to the*

**House Judiciary Committee**

January 13, 2021

*Nicole Livanos, Associate Director of Legislative Affairs  
National Council of State Boards of Nursing*

**Written Testimony in Support of Emergency Management Provisions**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments supporting the extension of certain emergency powers as being deliberated by this committee. My name is Nicole Livanos and I am the Associate Director in Legislative Affairs for the National Council of State Boards of Nursing. As a national organization aimed at promoting regulatory excellence in nursing, NCSBN supports a bill extending the waiver of APRN supervisory provisions.

Nurses across the United States continue to be at the forefront of this pandemic, and advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) are educated and trained to provide critical services to COVID-19 patients. States across the country must continue to look for and promote strategies to increase workforce mobility and eliminate unnecessary restrictions for all health care providers, including APRNs. In a March 2020 letter to states, Health & Human Services Secretary Azar urged that restrictive states such as Kansas remove unnecessary limitations on healthcare providers, "including any requirements for written supervision or collaboration agreements in order to avoid significant delays in the provision of services." With the passage of House Bill 2016 in June 2020, Kansas committed to eliminating such restrictions for APRNs treating COVID-19 patients to enable greater access to care for all Kansans impacted by the virus.

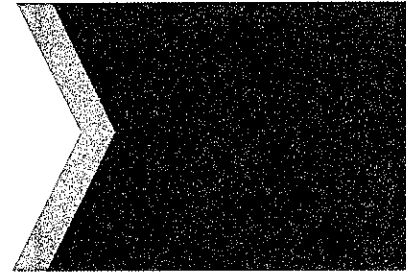
APRNs continue to provide a wide range of services during the pandemic. APRNs are critical in the administration of vaccines and COVID-19 tests, providing mental health support for essential workers that are experiencing increased rates of anxiety and depression, and managing complex critically ill COVID-19 patients in intensive care units (ICU) across the state. By removing the requirement that APRNs hold an administrative agreement with a physician licensed in Kansas when caring for COVID-19 patients, facilities are more easily able to recruit these highly trained professionals from across our borders, create a more mobile workforce within our state to respond to critical hot spots arising in different regions, and support provision of care through telehealth.

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020 as the Kansas Legislature enacted House Bill 2016, Kansas reported 51 new COVID-19 cases. By contrast, 4,875 new cases were reported in a single day just last week on January 8<sup>th</sup>. The need for this legislation is even greater today. APRNs are committed to continuing to provide vital care for patients across the state and patients and providers will benefit from a continuation of the removal of these unnecessary barriers.

Thank you for your consideration.

# Increasing Access to Care in Kansas

## Support Extension of Emergency Management Provisions for APRNs



*The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the critical role Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) have in providing care to underserved populations and areas across our state and the need to continue to remove regulatory barriers to that care.*

### APRNs and COVID-19 Care

#### APRN Primary Care Services

- COVID-19 vaccine administration
- Administration of COVID-19 tests
- Triage and management of COVID-19 positive patients
- Patient and community education on evolving data related to all aspects of the pandemic
- Continued high quality care of patients

#### APRN Mental Health Services

- Identify and treat mental health issues related to increased financial and economic strain
- Provide support services to essential workers experiencing increased stress and uncertainty, including health care professionals and educators
- Continued care for existing patients with mental health illness, such as depression and anxiety, which may be exacerbated by the pandemic

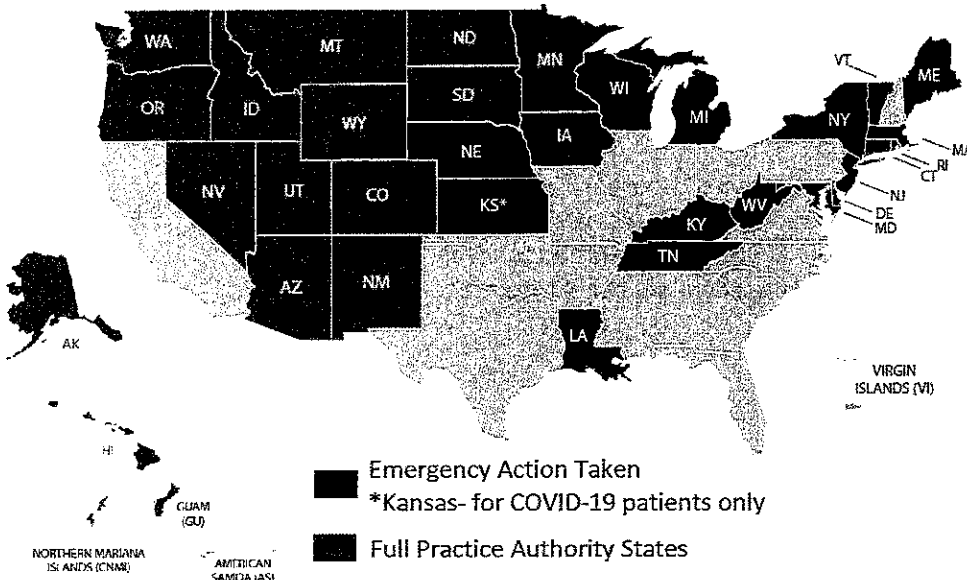
#### APRN Critical / Acute Care Services

- Manage complex critically ill COVID-19 patients in ICUs
- Management of critically ill patients in non-COVID units

#### Emergency Legislative & Executive Actions

- State of Emergency declared in all 50 states
- March 2020 Letter from HHS Secretary Azar urged states to eliminate restrictive "practice requirements for healthcare professionals... including any requirements for written supervision or collaboration agreements in order to avoid significant delays in the provision of services."
- 12 states with these restrictive supervisory or collaboration requirements waived these entirely or partially for APRNs.

#### APRN COVID-19 Waivers



- In Kansas, House Bill 2016 temporarily waived collaborative agreements for APRNs working with COVID-19 patients.
- COVID-19 cases continue to rise throughout the state.
- Kansas should extend the emergency provisions waiving APRN supervisory agreements to provide greater access to critical APRN care.

Prepared for by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing from numerous resources.

January 2021.