REQUESTING THAT HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND LABOR STUDY ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES BY OTHER STATES TOWARDS THE FULL PRACTICE MODEL AND THE COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE AGREEMENTS OF ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSES AND PHYSICIANS.

WHEREAS, the Institute of Medicine and the National Council of State Boards of Nursing recommend that states adopt a full practice model for advanced practice registered nurses; and

WHEREAS, a full practice model includes state practice and licensure laws that allow all advanced practice registered nurses to evaluate and diagnose patients, order and interpret diagnostic tests, and initiate and manage treatments, including the prescription of medications; and

WHEREAS, approximately twenty-one (21) states and the District of Columbia allow advanced practice registered nurses to practice and prescribe independently, or under the full practice model; and

WHEREAS, some states allow advanced practice registered nurses to have full prescriptive authority immediately upon passage of national or state examinations, while other states have a tiered, or stepped, approach; and

WHEREAS, as states move to a full practice model, states are creating formal advanced practice registered nurse residency programs similar to physician residency programs; and

WHEREAS, the first residency program for advanced practice registered nurses was started in 2007 at the Weitzman Center of the Community Health Center, Inc., of Connecticut, and since 2007, many states have implemented advanced practice registered nurse residency programs; and

WHEREAS, advanced practice registered nurses in the State of Arkansas must obtain a collaborative practice agreement with a physician to have prescriptive authority under Arkansas Code § 17-87-310; and
WHEREAS, a collaborative practice agreement is a written plan that identifies a physician who agrees to collaborate with an advanced practice registered nurse in the joint management of the health care of the advanced practice registered nurse’s patients and that outlines procedures for consultation with or referral to the collaborating physician or other healthcare professional as indicated by a patient’s healthcare needs; and

WHEREAS, in the 2014-2015 annual report published by the Arkansas State Board of Nursing, Arkansas has two thousand three hundred eighty-two (2,382) advanced practice registered nurses; and

WHEREAS, only one thousand six hundred ninety-nine (1,699) advanced practice registered nurses have prescriptive authority; and

WHEREAS, if advanced practice registered nurses performed within a full practice model and were allowed to have full prescriptive authority, approximately six hundred eighty-three (683) individuals could enter into the healthcare system in Arkansas without additional training or fiscal impact upon the state; and

WHEREAS, according to a 2015 research report issued by the RAND Corporation, additional advanced practice registered nurses with full prescriptive authority could help increase healthcare access, reduce healthcare costs, and promote efficient and timely health care across the state, particularly in medically underserved areas; and

WHEREAS, since the 1960s, studies have found no difference in health outcomes, including patient health status, number of prescriptions written, return visits requested, or referral to other providers, of care delivered by an advanced practice registered nurse or physician, according to a 2010 report by the Center to Champion Nursing in America; and

WHEREAS, a residency program for advanced practice registered nurses could begin to close the gap between being a student and being a primary care provider by allowing advanced practice registered nurses to gain more
experience prior to practicing without supervision under a full practice
model; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly should pursue efforts to improve
healthcare access by utilizing existing healthcare professionals, such as
advanced practice registered nurses, to the fullest extent possible,

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT PROPOSED BY THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND LABOR OF
THE NINETIETH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

THAT the House Committee on Public Health, Welfare, and Labor study
alternative approaches by other states towards the full practice model and
the collaborative practice agreements of advanced practice registered nurses
and physicians or other healthcare professionals.

BE IT FURTHER PROPOSED THAT, upon request, the Arkansas Nurses
Association and the Arkansas State Board of Nursing shall provide assistance
to the House Committee on Public Health, Welfare, and Labor to perform this
study.

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Dan Sullivan
District 53

Representative Justin Gonzales
District 19

By: JMB/JMB