REQUESTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND LABOR STUDY THE USE OF GLOBAL SIGNATURE AUTHORITY FOR AN ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSE IN OTHER STATES.

WHEREAS, global signature authority is the authorization to allow certain healthcare professionals to sign or otherwise complete forms related to patient care within their scope of practice; and

WHEREAS, some examples of the forms related to patient care are:

1. Providing certification of disability for patients to receive disabled parking placards;
2. Signing off on physicals for student athletes or school bus drivers;
3. Signing forms related to end-of-life care;
4. Signing forms excusing a potential jury member due to illness;
5. Signing worker's compensation forms for employees injured on the job; and
6. Signing valid information certificates such as birth certificates and death certificates; and

WHEREAS, dozens of forms relating to the daily provision of care for a patient may need to be signed to ensure the fulfillment of orders, referrals, or recognition of care by various entities; and

WHEREAS, some state laws may prohibit governmental entities or private companies from recognizing the signature of an advanced practice registered nurse by limiting the signature to only physicians; and

WHEREAS, twelve (12) states (Colorado, Georgia, Hawaii, Maine, Massachusetts, New Mexico, North Carolina, Rhoda Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and West Virginia) have enacted global signature authority; and
WHEREAS, other states have recognized the ability of an advanced practice registered nurse to sign all state forms within his or her scope of practice by including advanced practice registered nurses in each relevant statute or rule; and

WHEREAS, the State of Arkansas requires both an advanced practice registered nurse and a collaborating physician to sign forms that reflect the care that the advanced practice registered nurse has provided; and

WHEREAS, the additional requirement can create significant delays in patient care and cause unnecessary costs on follow-up visits for the completion of the forms; and

WHEREAS, global signature authority legislation helps promote:

(1) Transparency and accountability by allowing documentation to reflect the patient-provider relationship;

(2) Efficacy for patients as care delivery and form completion can be addressed in the same visit; and

(3) Productive use of healthcare workforce by eliminating the need for involvement of two (2) healthcare professionals to sign, stamp, certify, or endorse one (1) patient's forms; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly should pursue efforts to improve healthcare access by allowing advanced practice registered nurses to have global signature authority,

NOW THEREFORE,

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

THAT the House Committee on Public Health, Welfare, and Labor study the use of global signature authority for an advanced practice registered nurse in other states.
BE IT FURTHER PROPOSED THAT, upon request, the Arkansas State Board of Nursing and the Department of Health shall provide assistance to the House Committee on Public Health, Welfare, and Labor to perform this study.

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Mary Bentley
District 73

By: JMB/JMB