

Strengthen the Physician Workforce in Ohio by Supporting the Osteopathic Medicine Equivalency Act

Background

Osteopathic physicians (DOs) are fully licensed medical doctors who graduate from colleges accredited by the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA) and complete rigorous residency training. DOs are licensed to practice medicine and surgery in all its branches in every U.S. state, just like their MD counterparts. They often specialize in primary care and serve patients in rural and underserved areas.

DOs bring a whole-person approach to care and may incorporate osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT), a hands-on technique to support diagnosis and healing.



Problem



Despite equivalent education and licensure, DOs sometimes face:

- Unequal recognition in laws and regulations;
- Limited access to training programs;
- Exclusion of their AOA board certifications in favor of ABMS-only requirements.

These disparities worsen physician shortages and restrict patient access to care.

Solution



The Osteopathic Medicine Equivalency Act:

- Ensures DOs have the same rights and privileges as MDs;
- Guarantees DO students equal access to state-funded training programs.
- Strengthens truth in advertising and cuts down on loophole exploitation.

The Impact

- ✓ Expands access to care in underserved areas.
- ✓ Strengthens the physician workforce.
- ✓ Supports equitable treatment for all licensed physicians.
- ✓ Aligns state law with federal standards and professional realities.