

## Candidate Questions

Heather Swiger, Ohio State Senate District 19

**1) Should everyone have access to high-quality health care? Strongly agree**

**Comments:** As a non-profit leader I see daily the effects of limited health care does to our communities. Everyone should have access to health care and not have to choose between health and housing.

2) Ohioans receive the best health care when physicians serve as the leader in a team approach to medicine. Physicians are trained and licensed to provide comprehensive patient assessment and diagnosis and may order x-rays, chest scans, perform surgeries, and have full prescriptive authority. Physician extenders such as physician assistants, advanced practice registered nurses, physical therapists, and other providers have less education and training than physicians. However, organizations and lobbyists supporting physician extenders often pursue legislation granting access to patients that reach beyond their education and training, endangering patient care.

**Would you support legislation that extends the scope of practice rights for physician extenders that would allow them to evaluate, test and treat patients without physician supervision? Yes**

**Comments:**

3) As a profession, the OOA highly values the physician-patient relationship. Physicians must be able to exercise their clinical judgment and practice evidence-based medicine without legislative or regulatory interference. Further, the OOA opposes any attempt to criminalize a physician's medical actions or treatment plans.

**What is your feeling on this position? Agree**

**Comments:**

4) As our state grappled with the COVID-19 pandemic last year, we saw medical misinformation and distrust of science compound the problem. Now, routine vaccinations among children are lagging behind pre-pandemic levels. Missing even one routine vaccine can disrupt a child's immunization schedule. Diseases like polio, rubella, measles, and whooping cough are rare today because of vaccinations.

**Generally, do you support vaccines and immunizations as a way of preventing disease?**

(example Hepatitis B, measles/mumps/rubella, polio, etc.) **Yes**

**Comments:**

5) Legislation has been introduced in the Ohio Legislature several times (HB 221 this session) that would remove the collaboration agreement between advanced practice registered nurses and physicians. This proposal jeopardizes optimum care by circumventing the physician-led, team-based approach and allowing independent practice authority for APRNs.

**Would you support or oppose HB 221 and similar legislation? Oppose**

**Comments:**

6) Medicaid providers care for those most in need of health care services. The state's Medicaid system has endured fluctuating federal funding the last several years. Far too often, budget savings are proposed through cuts to Medicaid provider rates. These huge cuts would restrict access to health care for those who cannot seek treatment elsewhere.

**As a legislator, would you support or oppose Medicaid provider rate cuts? Oppose**

**Comments:**

7) The Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine (OU-HCOM) is the state's largest medical school. OU-HCOM now graduates 1,000 osteopathic physicians every four years. Further, OU-HCOM consistently maintains the highest in-state residency program match rate of the seven medical schools in Ohio. Now more than ever, osteopathic physicians are providing and benefiting health care throughout the state.

**To that end, will you protect state funding for OU-HCOM as a means to benefit health access and provide quality health care in Ohio? Yes**

**Comments:**

8) **Do you know a DO? If so, who are they and how are you connected to them?**

No