

The Senate committee on Public Health, Welfare and Labor voted against a bill Wednesday that would expand the abilities of nurse practitioners in the state, after hearing testimony for and against it for over an hour.

The bill would have granted nurse practitioners the authority to write prescriptions without the necessity of having a collaborative practice agreement with a licensed physician.

Dr. Amanda Deel, a family physician in Jonesboro, spoke against the legislation. She discussed the two medical schools that recently opened in the state, and suggested the state wait for students currently enrolled to help before expanding the abilities for nurse practitioners.

Nursing Bill Fails CC1 :14 "...all deserve."
"I'd like to ask again. Give us time to fill the physician shortage with physicians, and give all Arkansans the level of treatment by physicians that we all deserve."

Sen. Bart Hester said waiting for more students to graduate from medical school could result in another 6-8 years of "failure to deliver access to the people of Arkansas before we can start seeing results, or if we change this we get results immediately, possibly."

Deel disagreed.

Nursing Bill Fails CC2 :15 "...offense to that"
"You're saying that any care is better than no care? Well, you're talking about my mom's care, my niece and nephew's care, my brother and sister in law's care and I take offense to that."

The committee voted 5-3 against it.