



The Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives Believes Nurse Practitioners Are the Equivalent of Physicians. Do You Agree?

On Tuesday, I was in Tallahassee on the first day of the 2020 Florida Legislative Session. The Speaker of the House, Jose Oliva, opened the session with a speech that was chilling to say the least. He made it abundantly clear that, in his view, nurse practitioners and physicians are interchangeable. He showed absolute contempt for the medical profession and devalued the years of education and training we receive in order to provide high quality medical care to our patients. Speaker Oliva's number-one legislative priority this year is to allow nurse practitioners AND physician assistants to practice independently, without any supervision requirements from a physician.

Enough is enough. If there were ever a time for physicians to be unified, it is now. The Florida Medical Association is prepared to take on this fight and you have my word that we will defend the practice of medicine with every resource at our disposal. I am tired of politicians who attempt to diminish our medical degrees and the rigorous training we receive in order to become licensed physicians.

I realize that not everyone has the time to come to Tallahassee to meet with their legislators. That is why the FMA exists — to give you and your profession a voice. However, every physician can contribute something. If you are not a member of the FMA, [please join or renew today](#). Please support our political advocacy by [contributing to the FMA PAC today](#) or [increasing your involvement by joining the 1000+ Club](#). You can also help fight for the medical profession by [chipping in any amount you can to our special legislative fund](#). I assure you that your money will be used judiciously.

I would like to share with you the comments made yesterday by House Speaker Oliva:

"I am standing here saying that an Advanced Nurse Practitioner who has at least a four-year degree in nursing, a graduate degree, in many cases, a doctorate in nursing and 2,000 hours of clinical, supervised residency to be allowed to practice what they studied! Allowing Advanced Nurse Practitioners to practice independently will have an immediate positive effect on access and affordability. [It is a stain upon a state that prides itself on leading to even humor talk of patient safety coming from interest groups when we now know beyond a shadow of a doubt of its safety and efficacy. Or worse, to use phrases like, 'If you want to be a doctor, study to be a doctor.'](#) Thirty states have outgrown this backwards policy. Thirty! It is high time we allow healthcare professionals to practice to the extent of their training!"

Every physician in the state of Florida should take offense at these comments. Our profession and everything we have worked hard to achieve through education and training are being threatened.

We will keep you posted on this important issue over the next 58 days of the Legislative Session.

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