

For Immediate Release
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Florida Association of Nurse Practitioners
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Walgreens Take Care Clinic's Sandra Ryan Presents at Tax Watch ARNP Scope of Practice Summit: AIF's Tom Feeney Encourages Florida to Remove Barriers to NP Practice.

Florida's Tax Watch held an ARNP Scope of Practice Summit this week. Take Care Clinic at Walgreens Chief Nurse Practitioner Officer joined Associated Industries of Florida's Tom Feeney joined leaders from the Nurse Practitioner community to discuss how restrictions to ARNP practice are harming Florida's businesses.

Chief Nurse Practitioner Officer, Sandra Ryan of the Take Care Clinics at Walgreens, encouraged Florida policy makers to let nurse practitioners practice to the full extent of their education and training. She spoke about how the regulations in Florida are problematic for opening new clinics. Ryan went on to say these regulations increase costs to business and decrease access to health care.

Tom Feeney President and CEO of Associated Industries of Florida participated on a stakeholder panel at the Summit. Feeney spoke about how the costs of underutilizing nurse practitioners are ultimately born by Florida businesses. The former house speaker went on to say that the costs of health care are forcing businesses to make tough choices and nurse practitioners could help ease the burden.

Stan Whittaker, chair of the Florida Association of Nurse Practitioners also spoke at the Summit stated "The regulations that prevent nurse practitioners from delivering care are outdated. They have been in place virtually unchanged for almost forty years."

Whittaker went on to say that 18 states license nurse practitioners to practice to the full extent of their education and without a physician's supervision and many more are looking at joining these states to help with the need for primary care providers. Whittaker went on to say that economic forecast models applied to Florida may bring an economic stimulus of up to 16 billion dollars into the economy.

The Summit comes at a time when Florida is facing the largest expansion of Medicaid in the state due to the Affordable Care Act. The state is grappling with a physician shortage as fewer numbers of medical school graduates are choosing to go into primary care. Eighty percent of Nurse Practitioners specialize in primary care, and they comprise twenty percent of Medicaid providers. Evidence consistently shows that Nurse Practitioners deliver high quality cost effective safe care. There are 13,000 nurse practitioners in Florida who could immediately, without any additional cost or training, provide Floridians increased access to health care.