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**CONTACT:**

Bryan E. Mielke: [Bryan.Mielke@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:Bryan.Mielke@myfloridahouse.gov)

**Florida House Passes Bill to Provide Highly Qualified Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners the Ability to Practice Without Physician Supervision**

**Tallahassee, FL**— The Florida House of Representatives today passed CS/CS/HB 7113 to address the current and projected health care workforce shortage in Florida. The bill expands the scope of practice for advanced registered nurse practitioners by authorizing them to prescribe controlled substances under a supervising physician’s protocol. More important, the bill allows certified nurse practitioners who meet certain criteria to register as “Independent Nurse Practitioners” and practice without physician supervision. Independent Nurse Practitioners may also prescribe controlled substances autonomously, subject to an exclusionary formulary.

“We have a striking shortage of primary care providers in Florida that is only going to worsen with time. Florida is the most restrictive state in America when it comes to allowing highly qualified nurse practitioners to practice to the full extent of their education and training. I believe the new authorities granted to certain Independent Nurse Practitioners under this bill will enhance access to good primary care for Florida residents. In all the states that already grant these authorities, there is no evidence of harm or adverse outcomes,” said Representative Cary Pigman (R-Avon Park), Vice Chair of the House Select Committee on Health Care Workforce Innovation.

“Current law requires a nurse practitioner to establish a supervisory relationship with a physician, even if that physician is not collaborating with the nurse practitioner and simply signs charts at the end of the month. Often this supervisory relationship requires the nurse practitioner to pay a significant fee to the physician, with this additional cost being absorbed into the overall health care system. Florida residents do not benefit from this increased expenditure,” continued Vice Chair Pigman.

“The House Select Committee on Health Care Workforce Innovation was tasked with investigating health care practitioner workforce needs and exploring policy options for meeting those needs. For nearly five months, the Select Committee studied the problems in Florida and heard from health care industry experts on possible solutions. The Committee developed a comprehensive set of proposals which take significant steps to address the health care workforce shortage in Florida,” said Representative Jose Oliva (R-Miami Lakes), Chair of the House Select Committee on Health Care Workforce Innovation.

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