



AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION

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July 18, 2017

The Honorable Bill Cassidy
United States Senate
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Joe Manchin III
United States Senate
306 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Angus King
United States Senate
133 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Cassidy, Manchin, and King:

On behalf of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and the nearly 130,000 osteopathic physicians and medical students we represent, I write to express our support for the "Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act of 2017" (S. 781). The AOA applauds your leadership to improve the nation's medical liability system. The AOA is committed to supporting legislation that will create a more balanced medical liability system, thus improving patient access to physician services, especially in times of emergency, and reducing the costs of care provided.

The current medical liability system presents a significant challenge to our nation's health care delivery system. It adversely impacts patient access to physician services, the physician-patient relationship, the overall costs of health care, and the training of the future physician workforce. Due to current inconsistencies in both federal and state law medically trained volunteers are open to civil liability, even in times of natural disaster. During a disaster, it is vital to enable physicians to provide their much needed services without uncertainty about liability hanging over their heads.

Your legislation would provide important civil liability protection to physicians and other health professionals who are volunteering their services in times of a declared national disaster. Thus, patients will receive health care services while still retaining protection from gross negligence and criminal misconduct by holding health professionals to the same standards included in the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997. We believe that this is an important step toward improving the nation's medical liability system.

The AOA and our members thank you for introducing this important legislation. We look forward to working with you and your colleagues to secure its enactment into law.

Sincerely,

Boyd R. Buser, DO
President