



February 23, 2017

The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker
Chairwoman
Hawaii State Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Hawaii State Capitol
Room 230
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chairwoman Baker:

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and the Hawaii Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons (HAOPS) are writing to urge you to reconsider your support for SB 513. This bill would expand the scope of practice for pharmacists by allowing them to independently prescribe and dispense self-administered hormonal contraceptives. We are opposed to this expansion of practice rights because the bill lacks appropriate increases in education, training and competency demonstration requirements that protect patients. The AOA and HAOPS also believe that removing physician involvement from patient care could place the health and safety of Hawaii's patients at risk.

The AOA represents nearly 130,000 osteopathic physicians (DOs) and osteopathic medical students, promotes public health, encourages scientific research, serves as the primary certifying body for DOs and is the accrediting agency for osteopathic medical schools. More information on DOs/osteopathic medicine can be found at www.osteopathic.org. HAOPS is a professional medical organization that represents over 300 DOs providing patient care in Hawaii.

While we value the contributions of pharmacists to the health care delivery system, we believe any expansion of their authority to provide direct patient care without appropriate oversight should be directly related to additional education and competency demonstration requirements.

Risks of hormonal contraception include:

- **Serious side effects** including: blood clots, stroke and death.
- **Increased risk of depression;** A study published last year in the *Journal of the American Medical Association Psychiatry* also found that using hormonal contraception increased women's risk of developing depression by 23 percent overall, and nearly doubled the risk for teenagers.¹

¹ Rodriguez, Carmen Heredia. "Large Danish Study Links Contraceptive Use to Risk of Depression." *Kaiser Health News*, Sept. 28, 2016. Available at: <http://khn.org/news/large-danish-study-links-contraceptive-use-to-risk-of-depression/>.

In order to ensure patient safety:

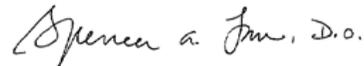
- **Ongoing and continuous physician involvement is necessary**, as these risks highlight, in the evaluation of patients on contraceptives.
- **The only way to ensure delivery of high quality health care and patient safety** is to maintain a high level of ongoing evaluation and physician involvement.

Expanding the scope of practice for pharmacists to prescribe contraceptives without appropriate oversight and commensurate increases in education and competency demonstration requirements could place patient safety and the public at risk. **We urge you to protect the safety of Hawaii's patients by reconsidering your support for SB 513**. Should you need any additional information, please feel free to contact Nick Schilligo, MS, Associate Vice President, State Government Affairs at nschilligo@osteopathic.org or (800) 621-1773, ext. 8185.

Sincerely,



Boyd R. Buser, DO
President, AOA



Spencer Lau, DO
President, HAOPS

CC: Mark A. Baker, DO, AOA President-elect
William J. Burke, DO, Chair, AOA Department of Governmental Affairs
Richard Thacker, DO, Chair, AOA Bureau of State Government Affairs
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