



February 20, 2017

The Honorable Cynthia Soto
Chairwoman
Illinois State Health Care Licenses Committee
288-S Stratton Office Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Chairwoman Soto:

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and the Illinois Osteopathic Medical Society (IOMS) are writing in opposition to HB 274. This bill would expand the scope of practice for pharmacists by allowing them to independently prescribe and dispense hormonal contraceptive medications and self-administered contraceptive devices. 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 IOMS believe that removing physician involvement from patient care could place the health and safety of Maryland'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. IOMS is a professional medical organization that represents over 3,500 DOs providing patient care in Illinois.

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

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.

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/>.

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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. **The AOA and IOMS urge you to protect the safety of Illinois patients by opposing HB 274.** Should you need any additional information, please feel free to contact Nicholas 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



Melanie R. Jessen, DO
President, IOMS

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