



MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY

Every physician matters, each patient counts.

June 25, 2024

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The Honorable Aaron M. Michlewitz
Chair, House Committee on Ways & Means
State House, Room 243
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Mr. Chair:

The Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS) deeply appreciates your efforts, and those of the committee members and staff involved, to produce *H.4789, An Act relative to strengthening Massachusetts' economic leadership*. The MMS commends your leadership in funding improvements to the Commonwealth's economic infrastructure, fostering innovation in industry, and spurring economic opportunity and job creation.

We believe the following amendment would build upon the House's commitment and is one avenue to address primary workforce shortages and close gaps in care access and, as such, we wish to be recorded in support of:

Amendment #328 – Improving healthcare delivery for underserved residents of the Commonwealth

The Commonwealth should seize the opportunity to integrate internationally trained physicians (ITPs) into critical areas of need to mitigate current and future physician shortages. ITPs, having received education, training, and licensure abroad, bring extensive independent medical practice experience, often spanning many years. Despite their qualifications, ITPs encounter significant barriers to entering the U.S. health care workforce as physicians. This proposal would allow Massachusetts to join a growing number of states that have pioneered alternative pathways for ITPs to practice. By streamlining licensure processes for ITPs, Massachusetts can reduce barriers to care in underserved communities, promote diversity in the physician workforce, and advance health equity across the Commonwealth.

Lastly, we would like to be recorded **in opposition** to amendments #13 (Keeping Podiatrists in the Commonwealth) and #395 (Removing Barriers to Care for Physician Assistants). The legislature, in fulfilling its duty to protect patients in the Commonwealth, has meticulously established a patient-centered framework of policies and statutory requirements. These provisions rely on the training and expertise of physicians to independently deliver medical care and supervise other health care

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providers. Amendments #13 and #395 threaten to undermine these patient-centered protections and could result in a vastly varying quality of patient care. For these reasons, the MMS strongly opposes these amendments.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Hugh M. Taylor, MD