



February 14, 2024

Maryland Senate Finance Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 East Wing
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Madam Chair and members of the Committee,

On behalf of over 3,750 physician assistants nationwide, we write to express the Society of Dermatology Physician Assistants' (SDPA) strong support of Maryland Senate Bill 167. This important legislation offers much needed improvements to the state's current regulations on the supervision and daily practice of physician assistants and would go far in modernizing these rules with best practices followed by other leading states. The bill's passage would immediately benefit patients' access to care by allowing physician assistants to serve properly as full members of their medical practice team without layers of outdated regulatory burdens.

Under current regulations, dermatology procedures being performed by a PA must first be performed under the direct supervision of a physician on at least ten occasions and additionally approved by the Board of Medicine for each procedure. PAs are highly trained and knowledgeable licensed medical professionals and yet face these additional burdensome requirements that are not placed on nurse practitioners or even registered nurses performing the same procedures. This not only represents a waste of the physician's time and attention, it illogically discourages the hiring of well-trained and talented physician assistants throughout the state.

Neighboring jurisdictions, including D.C. and Virginia, do not place these outdated requirements on PAs. Instead, as in most states across the country, a PA's practice is defined by the terms of a practice agreement made with a supervising or collaborating physician. SDPA has heard from multiple PA members in the region who have been licensed to practice in Maryland but choose not to accept employment agreements due to the state's unique regulatory burdens. This is an unnecessary loss of talent to the state that ultimately impacts the access to care available to patients.

SDPA is greatly encouraged by the introduction of Maryland's SB 167, which would establish the collaboration agreement model of practice in the state and greatly improve the professional environment for PAs currently practicing there or interested in doing so. We ask your committee to approve its passage today.

Society of Dermatology Physician Assistants (SDPA)

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SDPA is a 501c6 non-profit professional organization composed of dermatology physician assistants and members of related medical professions. Founded in 1994, the SDPA currently has over 4,700 members and is the largest specialty constituent organization of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura Bush PA-C".

Laura Bush, DMSc, PA-C, DFAAPA
President, SDPA