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Association of American Physicians and Surgeons, Inc.
A Voice for Private Physicians Since 1943
Omnia pro aegroto

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Statement in Support of SB 911 - Food, Drugs, and Cosmetics – Gene Structure–
and Function–Modifying, Products – Labeling

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a statement in support of SB 911.

The Association of American Physicians and Surgeons – AAPS – is a non-partisan professional association of physicians in all types of practices and specialties across the United States. Since 1943, AAPS has been dedicated to the highest ethical standards of the Oath of Hippocrates and to preserving the sanctity of the patient-physician relationship and the practice of private medicine. Our motto, “omnia pro aegroto” means “all for the patient.”

In the AAPS Patient Bill of Rights it is stated that patients must have the right, to be informed about ... the risks and benefits of treatment and appropriate alternatives” and the right “to refuse medical treatment.” In addition, the AAPS Principles of Medical Ethics, directs physicians to conduct themselves, “at all times with dignity, integrity, honesty and diligence in the practice of the profession to engender the confidence of patients.”

SB 911 aligns with these principles, along with the foundational medical concept of informed consent, by requiring that products with the potential for altering individuals’ genes be accurately labeled, including disclosure of potential adverse effects and other side effects which may occur with the use of the product.

It is important to note that therapies that involve genetic manipulation, while holding potential promise, are currently still largely experimental. “We are out on the far edge of experimentation,” warned New York University ethicist Arthur Caplan when asked about the recent death of a 27-year-old involved in a study involving a gene-editing technique.

Thus, it is exceedingly critical to protect patients’ right to understand when they may be subject to gene modification, through exposure from consumer products, medical interventions, or otherwise, given the increased inherent risks involved.

In summary, SB 911 should be adopted. Please stand up for patients and approve this important legislation.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeremy Snavelly
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