



1601 N. Tucson Blvd. Suite 9
Tucson, AZ 85716-3450
(800) 635-1196 or (520) 327-4885
FAX (520) 326-3529 or 325-4230
www.aapsonline.org

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 914 - Protections Against Discrimination – Genetic Procedures

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a statement in support of SB 914.

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 affirmed that patients must have “the right to refuse medical treatment.” In addition, the AAPS Code of Medical Practice states that it is “inimical to the interests of the patient and the public ... and destructive to the professional nature of medical practice ... to pressure patients to accept [unwanted] medical care.”

SB 914, by protecting patients from discrimination for refusing certain types of treatment, aligns with these principles espoused by AAPS that are also enshrined in foundational concepts of medical ethics like requirements of informed consent.

It is also 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 refuse such medical treatments, without harming their ability to participate in society, given the increased risks and currently unknown and unknowable side-effects.

In summary, SB 914 should be adopted. Please stand up for patients and approve this important legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Snavelly
Director of Regulatory Affairs
jeremy@aapsonline.org