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Medical Association of Georgia

Building a Better State of Health Since 1849

March 17, 2019

Chairman Renee Unterman
Senate Science and Technology Committee
121-G State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear Chairman Unterman:

The Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) has been the leading voice for the medical profession in the state since 1849. With more than 8,000 members, MAG represents physicians in every specialty and practice setting in Georgia. MAG would like to voice its opposition to H.B. 481.

H.B. 481 both criminalizes physicians and creates a private right of action against physicians when physicians care for their patients within their scope of practice. MAG opposes any legislation that violates the doctor/patient relationship and opposes legislation that threatens criminal prosecution against physicians who diagnose, prescribe and perform medical treatment within their scope of practice. MAG supports policies and legislation that allow women and families to maintain access to quality health care in Georgia. MAG's policy also states that physicians must have the right to refuse to perform abortions for any reason.

Considering the above policy positions, MAG opposes H.B. 481. Specifically, MAG opposes this bill because it would criminalize physicians practicing within their standard of care, creates a new civil cause of action against physicians, could undermine efforts to recruit and retain OB-GYN in Georgia, and could further restrict access to health care in rural Georgia.

Sincerely,

Rutledge Forney, M.D.
President

RF;BES

Cc: Donald J. Palmisano, Jr., MAG Executive Director/CEO