



February 14, 2017

The Honorable Joseph M. McNamara
Chair, House Committee on Health, Education and Welfare
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Support H 5228 - Lasers and Energy-Based Procedures

Dear Chairman McNamara and Honorable Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Patients/Physicians United for Laser Safety and Efficacy (PULSE) coalition, representing a wide range of health care organizations and affected patients, I am writing to express our support of House Bill 5228 (H 5228). PULSE believes that this legislation is an important step forward in the effort to protect patient safety in Rhode Island by ensuring that procedures which utilize laser and energy-based devices are performed under the on-site supervision of a physician.

As written, we believe that H 5228 appropriately addresses the delegation of laser and energy-based procedures to non-physician providers. When used inappropriately or without necessary physician oversight, lasers and energy-based devices can cause painful burns and permanent scarring. However, when used by trained professionals under the on-site supervision of a physician, these procedures are extremely safe and effective.

In fact, a study done by Vic A. Narurkar, MD, which reviewed 123 complications resulting from laser treatments received by non-physicians, concluded that 82% of these complications occurred in facilities that had no on-site physician supervision.¹ By ensuring that delegated laser procedures are only performed by properly trained providers under the on-site supervision of a physician, patients will be able to receive safe and effective care from laser and energy-based devices.

Furthermore, PULSE considers quality patient care to include a physician's involvement in evaluating a patient's needs and current condition, selecting an appropriate course of treatment, and providing adequate information and follow-up care. This legislation is designed with patient safety and quality care in mind, with language stating that the delegating physician must perform an initial assessment of the patient to determine which procedure is appropriate and to select the proper settings on the chosen device specific to that patient. Additionally, the

¹ Narurkar, V.A. M.D. (2005). Complications from Laser Procedures Performed by Non-Physicians. *Skin & Aging*, 13(9), 70-71.



legislation also establishes the use of a written protocol which will institute a quality assurance plan and a description of necessary follow-up care.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide written comments on this important public health issue. In order to protect the citizens of Rhode Island from adverse events and to ensure quality care, PULSE urges the passage of H 5228. For further information or if you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jake Johnson, Manager of Advocacy and Practice Affairs for the American Society for Dermatologic Surgery Association, as staff representative to this coalition at jjohnson@asds.net or 847-956-9145.

Sincerely,

Rhode Island Dermatology Society
American Academy of Dermatology Association
American Society for Dermatologic Surgery Association
American Society for Laser Medicine & Surgery