

March 4, 2020

The Honorable Virginia Lyons
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633

RE: Amend S.253

Dear Senator Lyons:

On behalf of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) and the Northeastern Society of Plastic Surgeons (NESPS), we are writing to urge you to amend S.253, which would codify the definition of surgery in Vermont. ASPS is the largest association of plastic surgeons in the world, and in conjunction with NESPS, we represent board-certified plastic surgeons in the state. Our mission is to advance quality care for plastic surgery patients and promote public policy that protects patient safety.

If S.253 were enacted, Vermont would define surgery in a manner that is not consistent with the definition drafted by the American College of Surgeons and the American Medical Association (AMA).¹ ASPS strongly believes that the scope and definition of surgery should be evaluated and codified in a manner that ensures the practice of surgery is limited to trained surgeons. Passage of the measure would run directly counter to this important goal. Only a statutory definition of surgery that restricts the performance of surgery to allopathic and osteopathic physicians would ensure that all providers are held to the same, high standards and that patients are served by trained professionals who do not practice outside of a scope of practice appropriate for their training. Therefore, it is imperative that you amend this measure to prohibit non-physician providers from performing surgery.

As stated by the AMA, “patient safety and quality of care are paramount and, therefore, patients should be assured that individuals who perform these types of surgeries are licensed physicians (defined as doctors of medicine or osteopathy) who meet appropriate professional standards.” Therefore, we urge you to amend S.253 to ensure that Vermonters are protected against undereducated and undertrained individuals who should not be performing surgery. Please do not hesitate to contact Patrick Hermes, ASPS Director of Advocacy and Government Relations, at phermes@plasticsurgery.org or (847) 228-3331 with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Lynn Jeffers, MD, MBA, FACS
President, American Society of Plastic Surgeons



Brian S. Glatt, MD, FACS
President, Northeastern Society of Plastic Surgeons

¹ <https://policysearch.ama-assn.org/policyfinder/detail/surgery?uri=%2FAMADoc%2FHOD.xml-0-4317.xml>