



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
PLASTIC SURGEONS®



THE PLASTIC SURGERY
FOUNDATION®

Executive Office

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November 6, 2017

The Honorable Jason M. Lewis, *Senate Chair*
The Honorable Paul R. Feeney, *Vice Chair*

The Honorable Kate Hogan, *House Chair*
The Honorable Evandro C. Carvalho, *House Vice Chair*

Joint Committee on Public Health
General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
24 Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02133

RE: In Opposition to H. 2446, relating to maintenance of board certification

Dear Committee Members:

On behalf of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS), I write to register opposition to H.2446. This bill would allow physicians to let their board certification lapse, yet still participate in insurance plans, be employed by or secure hospital privileges, and obtain licensure in Massachusetts. On behalf of the 195 plastic surgeons treating patients in the Commonwealth, I am concerned about this proposed change and respectfully request that you oppose this legislation.

ASPS is committed to ensuring its patients receive the best care possible, and the Society believes that, across the practice of medicine, such a commitment requires physicians to: (1) stay abreast of the latest clinical research and standards of care; (2) demonstrate their mastery of the latest knowledge through objective and reliable assessment methods; and (3) integrate this knowledge into their practice. We believe that American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) boards in general, and the American Board of Plastic Surgery (ABPS) specifically, are critical to our members meeting these commitments. Furthermore, we believe the commitment to lifelong learning and clinical practice improvement that board certification and maintenance of certification (MOC) represent are not just appropriate criteria for hospitals, insurers and state regulators, but are essential.

H.2446 undercuts the rights of state regulators, hospitals and insurance carriers to determine what standards are required for participation. This bill is a step toward depriving patients of the confidence to know that their doctor is board certified and has maintained that board certification. Without this confirmation, patients may not be provided with the highest quality of care possible and cannot be assured that their physician has the current knowledge and skills necessary to perform their operation successfully. Board certification is unquestionably an appropriate criterion to consider in licensure and for credentialing a physician to a hospital staff or an insurance network, and legislative efforts to undermine its relevance are unwise.

The duration, breadth, and scope of training required by ABMS member-boards is the best validation of physician knowledge. While there has been displeasure in the physician community with the MOC requirements of certain ABMS member boards, this displeasure has been recognized and it is being acted

upon. The ABMS is committed to ensuring that its member boards are identifying and implementing user-friendly, cost-effective, and educationally-valuable methods of continuing education as the means of maintaining certification.

Most importantly, the life-long learning inherent in MOC is based on academic and practical training that will ultimately improve the care received by patients throughout Massachusetts. ASPS applauds the ABMS, and particularly the ABPS, for maintaining standards that reflect the needs and demands for patient safety and the highest level of physician practice.

Requiring ABMS-board certification is truly a matter of patient safety, and requiring such certification is well within the prerogative of state regulators, hospitals and health plans. Therefore, the American Society of Plastic Surgeons respectfully requests you **OPPOSE H.2446**. Please do not hesitate to contact Patrick Hermes, Senior Manager of Advocacy and Government Affairs, at phermes@plasticsurgery.org or (847) 228-3331 with any comments, questions or concerns.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey E. Janis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "E".

Jeffrey E. Janis, MD, FACS
President, American Society of Plastic Surgeons