



PO Box 78096
Washington, DC 20013-8096
www.HCLA.org

January 16, 2018

The Honorable Michael Burgess, MD
House Energy and Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Gene Green
House Energy and Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Subject: “Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act of 2017”

Dear Chairman Burgess and Ranking Member Green:

Representing a diverse coalition of providers and associations working to reduce medical lawsuit abuse and improve timely access to quality care, the Health Coalition on Liability and Access commends your decision to markup the *Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act of 2017* (H.R. 1876).

Over the past year, large-scale disasters have included the wildfires of California and the hurricanes and subsequent flooding of Texas, the Gulf Coast and Puerto Rico. These events highlight the need to ensure that medical professionals who seek to lend their expertise and assistance to victims of these natural disasters are not turned away or limited in the scope of their assistance because of the threat of medical liability lawsuits.

Inconsistencies in current federal and state laws could subject medical professionals and licensed health care providers to unjust medical liability lawsuits when they volunteer their services to disaster victims. The *Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act of 2017* would help protect medical volunteers from such lawsuits during a federally-declared disaster, and ensure that vital health care services often provided by medical volunteers remain available – all while respecting existing medical liability laws in individual states.

Additionally, the bill is narrowly tailored to apply its protections only to licensed health care providers, and will not apply to a health care provider if the harm caused was criminal or deliberate in nature.

The *Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act of 2017* will ensure that an adequate supply of trained health care professionals are ready, willing and able to volunteer their services during a catastrophe, and that they will not be deterred or turned away due to the threat of lawsuits.

On behalf of our coalition members, and patients and providers across the country, we urge the Subcommittee members to advance the *Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act of 2017* in the interest of improving medical care when disaster strikes.

Sincerely,

AMDA-The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine
American Academy of Dermatology Association
American Academy of Neurology
American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Osteopathic Surgeons
American College of Surgeons
American Medical Association
American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics
American Osteopathic Association
American Society of Plastic Surgeons
American Urological Association
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
Cooperative of American Physicians
COPIC
The Doctors Company
MAGMutual Insurance Company
Medical Assurance Company of Mississippi
Medical Insurance Exchange of California
Medical Liability Mutual Insurance Company
National Association of Spine Specialists
NORCAL Group
Physicians Insurance A Mutual Company
PIAA
Society for Vascular Surgery
SVMIC
TEAMHealth
Texas Alliance for Patient Access
Texas Medical Liability Trust

cc: Subcommittee on Health Members