



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
PLASTIC SURGEONS®



THE PLASTIC SURGERY
FOUNDATION™

Executive Office

444 East Algonquin Road • Arlington Heights, IL 60005-4664

847-228-9900 • Fax: 847-228-9131 • www.plasticsurgery.org

April 28, 2017

The Honorable Marsha Blackburn
2266 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: H.R.1876/H.R.1822, the Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act

Dear Congresswoman Blackburn:

I am writing on behalf of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) to thank you for introducing the *Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act* (H.R.1876/H.R.1822). ASPS is the world's largest association of plastic surgeons, with over 7,000 members representing 94 percent of Board-Certified Plastic Surgeons in the United States. We support this bill because it will ensure that medical professionals are available to provide necessary care in the wake of a catastrophic event by providing those medical professionals with necessary protections from certain types of civil liability.

Currently, federal law does not protect healthcare providers, including those who cross state lines, who volunteer their services to treat victims of natural or man-made disasters. This is a clear barrier for physicians who want to provide a civic service, and it is made worse by the existing patchwork of state laws dealing with these scenarios. In some cases, the unacceptable risk of liability results in qualified and needed health professionals choosing not to participate in disaster response, while in other cases state laws result in potential volunteers actually being turned away.

The *Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act of 2017* addresses this problem by providing civil liability protections to licensed health care professionals who volunteer their time and talents to aid disaster victims. Critically, the bill respects and supports existing state medical liability systems by limiting its protections to individuals treating victims of an event wherein a state has officially requested a federal disaster declaration and ending the protections when the declaration expires.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue and working to resolve it before another major disaster strikes the United States. Should you have any questions, please contact Patrick Hermes, Senior Manager of Advocacy and Government Affairs, at phermes@plasticsurgery.org.

Sincerely,

Debra Johnson, MD
President, American Society of Plastic Surgeons