



August 30, 2019

The Honorable Bill Cassidy
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: S.1350 – Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act of 2019

Dear Senator Cassidy:

I am writing on behalf of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) regarding S.1350. ASPS is the largest association of plastic surgeons in the world, representing more than 7,000 members and 93 percent of all board-certified plastic surgeons in the United States. ASPS strongly supports this bill because it would ensure that medical professionals are available to provide necessary care in the wake of a catastrophic event by providing 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 2019* would address 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.

ASPS applauds the introduction of the *Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act of 2019* and we look forward to working with you to advance this legislation during the 116th Congress. Please do not hesitate to contact Patrick Hermes, Director of Advocacy and Government Relations, at phermes@plasticsurgery.org or (847) 228-3331 with any questions.

Sincerely,

Alan Matarasso, MD, FACS
President, American Society of Plastic Surgeons