



Illinois  
State  
Medical  
Society

**Oppose HB 3355/SB 1725**  
**Efforts to Remove Important Patient Safety Protections Agreed to by Physicians**  
**Assistants and Physicians**

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Physicians at the Illinois State Medical Society respectfully request your “NO” vote on HB 2813 and SB 1725, bills that would not only nullify significant changes agreed to by the Illinois State Medical Society and the Illinois Academy of Physician Assistants, but would also provide physician assistants a broad scope of practice that mirrors the responsibilities of physicians while allowing them to treat patients independent of physicians.

Just last year, societies representing both physicians and physician assistants (PAs) came to an agreement on changes to Illinois law, which increased the number of physician assistants physicians can collaborate with from five full time equivalent PAs (exempting hospital settings) to seven full time equivalent PAs. There is no ratio in areas where services are provided in a federal primary care health professional shortage area with a Health Professional Shortage Area score greater than or equal to 12.

With this agreement, which became effective January 1, 2019, Illinois has the highest ratio of states that maintain ratio requirements. Ratios are in effect in 39 states, including the neighboring states of Indiana (4:1), Iowa (5:1), Kentucky (4:1), Missouri (3:1) and Wisconsin (4:1)

This bill would allow PAs to provide the same care, completely independent from any physician input, as physicians without requiring equivalent education and training standards that physicians are required by law to complete. While PAs are essential in a patient’s care and treatment, there is no substitute for a physician’s education and training. Not only will it be confusing to patients who may not understand the differences, allowing PAs to practice independent of physicians will likely lead to increases in misdiagnoses and over-utilization of services.

PAs are trained as to be part of a health care team and work with physicians. 47 states have physician supervision requirements. In Illinois, we moved from physician supervision to physician collaboration in 2017.

The belief that PAs can fill a health care void in areas that suffer from physician shortages is not accurate. Research continues to demonstrate that physicians and other health care professionals continue to work—and not work--in the same areas. Allowing the independent practice of PAs will not help solve the problem of health professional shortages in rural areas.

Patient safety must be the driver behind any modification to our health care laws. Nearly all states require PAs to practice with kind of physician supervision or collaborative agreement as part of a patient’s health care team.

**For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to vote NO on HB3355/SB 1725.**