



Jim Justice
Governor of West Virginia

April 12, 2017

VIA HAND DELIVERY

The Honorable Mac Warner
Secretary of State
State of West Virginia
Building 1, Suite 157-K
State Capitol
Charleston, WV 25305

Re: Enrolled Senate Bill 347

Dear Secretary Warner:

Pursuant to the provisions of section fourteen, article VII of the Constitution of West Virginia, I hereby disapprove and return the Enrolled Committee Substitute to Senate Bill 347. This bill strikes the existing requirement that a physician assistant must maintain National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants certification as a condition of renewal of their licensure, while also allowing physician assistants to work in "collaboration" with rather than under the "supervision" of a physician. The unfortunate effect of this bill is that it weakens existing professional safeguards governing the medical knowledge and skills of physician assistants that have been serving the public interest for years, even as it grants greater autonomy to physician assistants.

My first objection to the Bill is the striking of the following language from West Virginia Code § 30-3E-4:

"(5) Has a current certification from the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants;"

My second objection to the Bill is striking of the following language from West Virginia Code § 30-3E-6:

"(3) Proof that he or she is currently certified and has been continuously certified during the preceding licensure period by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants; and"

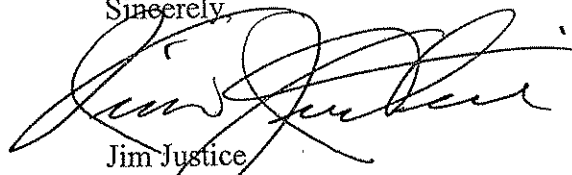
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Secretary Warner
April 10, 2017
Page 2

I appreciate the importance of enabling physician assistants to practice to the fullest extent of their training and of promoting patient access to health care. However, if the goal of the Bill is to modernize physician assistant practice to reflect current needs, we must also ensure that patients continue to receive treatment by health care providers who are operating with current clinical knowledge. By removing the state's requirement that physician assistants maintain national certification as a condition of renewing their license, the interests of West Virginia patients are not being protected as strongly as they should be.

For the forgoing reasons, I disapprove and return the Enrolled Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 347.

Sincerely,



Jim Justice
Governor

cc: The Honorable Mitch Carmichael
President of the Senate

The Honorable Tim Armstead
Speaker of the House of Delegates