

July 17, 2017

Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768-2910

Dear Representative:

Welcome back to Austin. On behalf of the 50,000-plus physician and medical student members of the Texas Medical Association – and the millions of Texans we serve – I applaud your dedication to your constituents and our patients.

Gov. Greg Abbott has wisely placed the continuation of the Texas Medical Board (TMB) and other health professions agencies as the first item for you to consider in this special session. Preventing the Sunset of the TMB and the Medical Practice Act are critical to Texas, to its physicians, to our patients, and to the state's economic stability.

The ramifications of inaction are, to a certain degree, unknown. And those unanswered questions should give us all pause:

- Are medical licenses still valid with no Medical Practice Act?
- Can anyone practice medicine? Or can no one?
- Can physicians perform medical procedures and give medical orders for lifesaving patient care?
- Can prescriptions be written or filled?
- Can physicians who practice unsafe medicine be sanctioned or stopped?
- Can Texas medical schools continue to teach our next generation of physicians?

Texas continues to break records in the number of physician license applications received, surpassing 5,500 in 2016 alone. With Texas' continuous and rapid population growth, our ability to quickly but safely license – and discipline – physicians must not be impeded.

TMA has long advocated for a strong but fair medical board. The agency has already undergone the complete Sunset review. Several of the Sunset Advisory Commission's key recommendations were addressed by legislation that passed during the regular session. TMB can accomplish most of the others administratively. Those remaining issues that require statutory changes can wait until the 2019 regular session.

TMA strongly urges you to renew the TMB and the Medical Practice Act as soon as you can. The health, safety, and lives of our fellow Texans depend upon your swift action. We stand ready to provide whatever assistance you require.

Sincerely,

Carlos J. Cardenas, MD
President

July 17, 2017

The Honorable [First] [Last]
Texas State Senate
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, TX 78711-2068

Dear Senator [Last]:

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Carlos J. Cardenas, MD
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