



Pennsylvania MEDICAL SOCIETY®

August 8, 2008

PETER S. LUND, MD
President

DANIEL J. GLUNK, MD
President Elect

JAMES A. GOODYEAR, MD
Vice President

BRUCE A. MACLEOD, MD, FACEP
Chair

TERRENCE E. BABB, MD
Secretary

ROGER F. MECUM
Executive Vice President

Honorable P. Michael Sturla
PA House of Representatives
House Box 202096
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2096

Dear Representative Sturla:

Thank you for allowing the Pennsylvania Medical Society to comment on House Bills 2715 and 2716, which are the subject of a House Professional Licensure Committee public hearing on August 13, 2008.

The purpose of these bills is to provide expanded title protection to nurses by prohibiting non-nurse health care providers from using the term "nurse" to describe themselves. From a patient safety perspective these bills make excellent sense. Health care providers have an important responsibility to avoid patient confusion over the title, qualifications and training of those who are providing treatment.

Unfortunately, the problem is not limited to those who may be misrepresenting themselves, intentionally or unintentionally, as nurses. For example, a patient has no way to know whether a provider wearing a "Dr. Jones" nametag is a physician, a doctor of chiropractic or a doctor of nursing.

In that vein, the committee should also consider House Bill 2727, which would require all health care providers to wear an identification badge containing the provider's name, photograph, and license, certificate or registration. This would quickly and easily eliminate any confusion over the qualifications of those who care for our citizens.

Make no mistake, House Bills 2715 and 2716 are a positive, if modest, start, and we support the bills. However, we strongly believe that the committee should address the issue raised by the bills in a comprehensive manner and pass House Bill 2727 at the same time.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Peter S. Lund, MD, FACS
President

cc: House Professional Licensure Committee members
Honorable John J. Siptroth

777 East Park Drive

PO Box 8820

Harrisburg, PA 17105-8820

Tel: (717) 558-7750

Fax: (717) 558-7840

Email: stat@pamedsoc.org

www.pamedsoc.org