



PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY
OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

October 20, 2011

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The Honorable Matthew E. Baker
Chairman, House Health Committee
108 Ryan Office Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Re: House Bill 1570

Dear Representative Baker:

On behalf of the over 4,700 members of the PA Academy of Family Physicians (PAFP), I write to share some of our preliminary concerns we have identified on House Bill 1570, PN 1932. I ask that you please include this written testimony as a part of your hearing today on House Bill 1570.

The PAFP has not had much time since learning of this hearing to adequately address the legislation in an encompassing way. However, the PAFP has identified some preliminary concerns with House Bill 1570 that have the potential to negatively affect our family physician members. These concerns include the following:

Definition of "Outpatient healthcare facility"

This definition appears to capture many physician diagnostic, therapeutic, treatment or rehabilitation services that are currently done by physicians while exempting hospital-based patient healthcare services. Additionally, the definition captures many arrangements currently offered by physicians, including imaging services, pain management services, etc.

§806(a)

This section would appear to require all of these currently unlicensed physician arrangements to be subject to Department of Health licensure. This may increase cost, potentially unnecessarily.

§806(a.2) Pediatric Patient Restrictions

Several amendments on pages 8 and 9 would restrict pediatric patients from receiving Ambulatory Surgical Facility (ASF) services. This appears to add layers of documentation requirements imposed on the surgeon to obtain from family physicians and other primary care physicians. This may be unduly burdensome to family physician practices.

§806(b) Hospital Regulations

This section appears to remove Department of Health criteria for regulatory oversight of hospitals by eliminating federal certification standards and third party payer standards, while relying exclusively on national accrediting organizations. The PAFP is not well versed at this time on what the accrediting standards entail, but we are preliminarily concerned. For example, could this change permit non-physician providers to hold seats on hospital medical staffs?

As the Committee considers House Bill 1570 further, the PAFP will continue to analyze the impact to our family physicians members and their patients. We look forward to ensuing dialogue on the issues we have preliminarily outlined in this testimony.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact PAFP staff, Andy Sandusky asandusky@pafp.com or Jennifer Reis jreis@pafp.com with questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John S. Jordan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

John S. Jordan, CAE
Executive Vice President and CEO