

Regarding Resolution B-7: *Strengthening the Physician-Physician Assistant Relationship in Washington*

Position: **Con**

Providing testimony: Constance D. Huynh, MPH, PA-C

Testifying On behalf of: **Washington Academy of Physician Assistants**

Good morning. My name is Constance Huynh, and I am a family practice PA and I am speaking “Con” to resolution B-7.

As President of the Washington Academy of Physician Assistants it is incumbent upon me to convey our concerns regarding this resolution and urge you to **REJECT resolution B-7**.

PAs have been trusted members of healthcare teams for 50 years, now. We work with physicians and other healthcare professionals to improve quality, efficiency and access to care for patients.

As healthcare providers committed to providing the highest quality of care, we are troubled by this resolution, which disregards the long and proud history of physician-PA team practice and the decades that PAs have been included as members of WSMA.

I would like to submit a written analysis for your consideration—it is too long to read its entirety, but I will highlight a few points. (I will submit a copy of this testimony and the analysis to the sergeant-at-arms.)

1. First and foremost, PAs are dedicated to practicing in healthcare teams with physicians. It is what our profession was created for. A national survey this year found 96% of PAs said they want to practice on teams with physicians.
2. However dedicated we are to working in team-based practice, there are growing concerns regarding our profession. We have heard reports from our members that physicians do not want to supervise PAs, and some employers are not hiring PAs because Washington legal requirements are burdensome, and in some cases, outdated. I’m worried about the future of PAs and the physicians who want to work with us.
3. WAPA supports continued work on healthcare teams and collaboration with physicians. However, WAPA cannot continue to support the underutilization of the PA profession in WA. AND that is what this resolution would do; it would relegate PAs to a second-class, under-appreciated status.
4. This resolution asks the “WA State Medical Association to endorse that a PA should only be authorized to provide patient care services only so long as the PA is functioning under the direction and supervision of a physician...”

That is not a part of current state law. RCW 18.71 states that PAs are licensed to practice medicine and are academically and clinically prepared to provide healthcare services they are competent to perform based on their education, training and experience.

Recognizing our capabilities as medical professionals that diagnose, treat and prescribe and not limiting our scope of practice would be the step in right direction in continuing our joint effort to provide high-quality, improved efficiency and increased access to our patients.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my “con” testimony on Resolution B-7. I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Constance D. Huynh, MPH, PA-C
President
Washington Academy of Physician Assistants