

Members of the House of Delegates:

In July 2017, the WSMA and the Washington Academy of Physician Assistants (WAPA) established an executive workgroup to discuss issues of concern to PAs in our changing healthcare environment. We have met twice and continue to work together toward solutions that both enhance patient safety and access to care, and will be amenable to both physicians and PAs.

On behalf of the joint WSMA-WAPA workgroup, we the undersigned oppose Resolution B-7. We believe that it is premature and would disrupt the work of this collaborative group which is currently gathering data across our state and nationally to assess the need for modernizing the laws and regulations governing physician and PA relationships. Resolution B-7 would establish WSMA policy that is not yet supported by data, and would limit the ability of the WSMA to explore new paradigms for PA practice.

At this early point, the workgroup has yet to study the scope of problems – real or perceived – within the current regulation of physician and PA relationships. We need to collect information, and propose ways to improve the current regulatory scheme, especially in medically underserved areas, in order to allow physicians and PAs to practice in partnership with one another in the safest, and most productive manner. We believe that if resolution B-7 were adopted, WSMA would risk alienating our WAPA constituents who need to modernize their practice in a rapidly changing healthcare environment.

We urge the House of Delegates to vote against the resolution at this time, and request that it be referred to the WSMA Executive Committee. This will allow the WSMA to approach this complex issue in a thoughtful, deliberate, and open manner. Our patients and WSMA physician and PA members will benefit from a thorough gathering of information and careful consideration of the current situation.

For this reason, we oppose.

For the WSMA:

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For WAPA:

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