**Monday, March 13, 2023**

**LEGISLATIVE UPDATE FROM THE ILLINOIS ACADEMY OF PAS**

Senators Ann Gillespie and Javier Cervantes, the chief Senate sponsors of the Illinois Academy of PAs Access for Patients legislation (Senate Bill 218), plan to hold a key meeting of stakeholders on Tuesday, March 21, in Springfield. The chief House sponsor, Rep. Lakesia Collins, also plans to attend. The IAPA lobbyist team will also attend.

Gillespie and Cervantes took the lead in promoting the legislation during the Illinois Senate Licensed Activities Committee hearing on Wednesday, March 8. The two authors of a recently released Southern Illinois University Journal of Medicine research article on the PA profession were testifying at the hearing. The peer-reviewed study by PA Cheri Kelly and APRN Molly Johnson found that PAs are not practicing to the full extent of their license. It concluded that Illinois could safely update its laws to provide parity between PAs and APRNs. Also testifying at the hearing was Jacob Ribbing, President of the Illinois Academy of PAs and an Assistant Professor at SIU School of Medicine.

Before the hearing, 1,026 individuals – mostly PAs – signed up as official supporters of the bill, a record for the Illinois Academy of PAs. This strong support is a credit to Illinois Academy of PAs board members and legislative committee members.

Some discussion at the Senate hearing focused on whether PAs could operate without a collaborative agreement during the Governor’s COVID-19 executive orders. During the hearing, the Illinois State Medical Society falsely claimed that only PAs from out of state working on COVID medical teams in Illinois could practice without physician collaboration. However, the actual language authorized PA practice without collaboration.

“Physician assistants licensed in Illinois or another US jurisdiction who are responding to the need for medical care during an emergency or declared disaster can provide that medical care with or without collaboration,” the executive order from April 6, 2020 said.

The order added, “Licensed physician assistants without a collaborating agreement must provide medical care within their training, education, and experience and follow any limitations placed on them by the facility where they are rendering services.”

FOX Illinois did a story on the issue:

[https://foxillinois.com/news/local/bill-pushing-to-extend-healthcare-providers-abilities](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flinkprotect.cudasvc.com%2Furl%3Fa%3Dhttps%253a%252f%252ffoxillinois.com%252fnews%252flocal%252fbill-pushing-to-extend-healthcare-providers-abilities%26c%3DE%2C1%2CDAD5cfk1pqHOM9VtMK9WS3rmwboauN46bzjdSx5R05KZcSrCzVClY1WQ-xbweu0gDPjR9oGSAlQDNCarBVnrg3uD6Kv_oVPMCLze3viY-A9LQ6ntfdGVCSdsImQ%2C%26typo%3D1&data=05%7C01%7Cmicah%40frontlineco.com%7C2979d57c44be4850132f08db23df1b9c%7Ce61443771400458c9bbc019d64c3c170%7C0%7C0%7C638143213392540586%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=77%2Bj%2FvtKcy3QTBok32EpFYU8y83jyBFQe%2FiQvgpVVr0%3D&reserved=0)

Unfortunately, due to intense lobbying pressure from the Illinois State Medical Society, both versions of the Access for Patients bill -- Senate Bill 218 and House 2306 – did not advance out of their respective committees by the March 3 deadline. However, Senator Gillespie has been granted an extension for Senate Bill 218, meaning it can still be called for a vote.

We will let Illinois PAs know of any upcoming developments and actions that are needed. The General Assembly Spring session is scheduled to adjourn on Friday, May 19.