



Two Woodfield Lake, 1100 E. Woodfield Road, Suite 350, Schaumburg, IL 60173 ♦ Phone: (847) 517-1050 ♦ Fax: (847) 517-7229
email: info@aacuweb.org ♦ website: www.aacuweb.org

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July 23, 2020

The Honorable Jim Wood
Chair, Committee on Health
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 6005
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 977 (Monning) related to health facilities - OPPOSED

Dear Assembly Member Wood,

The American Association of Clinical Urologists (AACU) is a leading professional organization for the specialty of urology, a branch of medicine that focuses on conditions affecting the urinary-tract system and male reproductive organs. The AACU represents the interests of more than 800 urologists in California and more than 3,000 nationwide. As physicians concerned with healthcare industry consolidation, we support reforms that alleviate market pressures on independent, private practice urologists. Regrettably, these factors are left unaddressed in Senate Bill 977, a bill to require a health care system, private equity groups and hedge funds to obtain consent of the Attorney General (AG) prior to an affiliation or acquisition between any of those parties and a health care facility or provider.

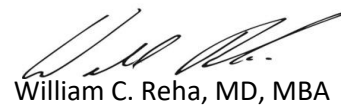
We believe this legislation would create burdensome and unnecessary review processes while giving the AG discretion to determine when relevant criteria are met, without clear parameters. What's more, any fees and fines obtained through civil actions will be deposited in the AG's antitrust account, possibly incentivizing the AG to bring such civil suits against healthcare systems. We concur with the California Medical Association which writes that the proposed process seems to favor large health care systems that can afford legal expenses to secure necessary approvals for such agreements, thus disadvantaging smaller, independent practices.

For the reasons stated above, we stand in strong opposition to this proposal believing it does not address the issues that make it increasingly difficult to maintain independent practice. Therefore, we ask you to defeat Senate Bill 977, related to health facilities.

Sincerely,


Scott B. Sellinger, MD, FACS

President
American Association of Clinical Urologists


William C. Reha, MD, MBA

Chair
AACU State Advocacy Network



Protecting the political and professional interests of Urology since 1968