



Issue: Medical Practice Freedom

Issue Summary¹:

- Lawmakers and regulators have proposed mandated participation in health insurance programs as a condition of licensure for more than 40 years.
- Tens of thousands of Americans will soon enter the health care system with some form of public or private insurance.
- Public and private third-party reimbursement of health care professionals sometimes does not meet the cost of providing the service.
- Mandated acceptance of lower-than-cost reimbursements will threaten the viability of thousands and of jobs in the health care sector and millions of dollars in state and local taxes attributed to independent medical practices.
- With mounting legislative, regulatory and financial pressures on health care professionals, licensees must be afforded the opportunity to make individual decisions about those third parties they choose to engage.
- The Medical Practice Freedom Act will attract health care professionals who are concerned by rapid and ill-defined "transformation", thereby addressing provider shortages and contributing to a significant economic generator.

Legislative Summary:

The following State Legislative Examples, inspired by the AMA Advocacy Resource Center's Voluntary Physician Participation Act and the AACU's Medical Practice Freedom campaign, specify that health care professionals may not be required to participate in third party reimbursement programs as a condition of licensure. The Washington State model includes a prohibition on tying reimbursement to a percentage of Medicaid payments without notice. The Georgia model goes further to declare that the Board of Medicine shall be solely responsible for the licensing of medical professionals.

For More Information:

Visit the AACU Action Center (www.aacuweb.org) or contact State Affairs Manager Ross Weber (statesociety@aacuweb.org) for additional information on this issue and to coordinate a successful legislative campaign.

¹ Summarized, in part, from the American Medical Association Advocacy Resource Center's "Voluntary Physician Participation Act". <http://www.ama-assn.org/go/arc>.