STATE CAPITOL
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California Legislature

August 13, 2026
The Honorable Vasco Deon Kidd, PA–C, President
Physician Assistant Board
2005 Evergreen Street, Suite 2250
Sacramento, CA 95815

The Honorable Diego Inzunza, PA-C, Vice President
Physician Assistant Board
2005 Evergreen Street, Suite 2250
Sacramento, CA 95815

RE: PRACTICE AGREEMENT STUDY REQUESTED IN AB 1501

Dear President Kidd, Vice President Inzunza and Members of the Board,

The undersigned legislators write respectfully with the request that the Physician Assistant Board exercise its authority under section 3502.35(a) to facilitate a review of practice agreements and how they are utilized in other states as envisioned by the Legislature. As you know, through AB 1501 (Berman), Chapter 194, statutes of 2025, the legislature expressed its intent that a comprehensive review of physician assistant practice agreement structures be undertaken in consultation with relevant stakeholders when it amended Business & Professions Code section 3502.35.

"California's shortage of health workers has reached crisis levels and imperils Californians' ability to access the care they need to live healthy lives."1 In fact, only half of the California's primary care needs were met in 2023.2 The crisis is especially acute in rural areas of the state and in communities of color and is particularly acute in obstetrics and mental health. For example, "[a]t least 46 California hospitals have shut down or indefinitely suspended labor and delivery since 2012 … Twenty-seven of the maternity ward and hospital closures have taken place in the last three years [2020-23]. These rapid-fire closures leave huge swaths of California with dwindling access to obstetrics services, leading to longer travel times and additional barriers to care."3"Twelve counties, most of them rural, do not have any hospitals delivering babies."4 "California has 84 designated geographic mental health shortage areas, covering 41 counties."5

"Latinos, African Americans, and Native Americans are the majority of residents in areas with a physician shortage."6

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1 https://www.chcf.org/publication/how-california-is-strengthening-its-health-workforce-an-explainer/#related-links-and-downloads
2 https://www.kff.org/other/state-indicator/primary-care-health-professional-shortage-areas-hpsas/?currentTimeframe=0&selectedRows=%7B%22states%22:%7B%22california%22:%7B%7D%7D%7D&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D&utm_medium=email&utm_source=transaction
3 https://calmatters.org/health/2023/11/california-maternity-wards-close-los-angeles-bay-area/
4 https://calmatters.org/health/2023/11/california-hospitals-close-maternity-wards/?series=no-deliveries-maternity-care
5 https://www.modbee.com/news/local/article288893528.html#storylink=cpy
6 https://latino.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/LPPI-CPS-Summary.pdf

The Legislature included section 3502.35 because it recognized that the physician assistant profession has evolved significantly and that policy decisions should be informed by a thoughtful examination of current practice agreement structures, a comprehensive review to better understand what is working well, what challenges exist, and whether changes may be appropriate to continue advancing safe, high-quality, and accessible health care. Given its responsibility for licensing and regulating physician assistants, the Board's expertise is essential to this conversation.

Existing research underscores the value of such a review. A 2018 joint report from the *Healthforce Center at UCSF and the California Health Care Foundation* provides important context for the review envisioned by the Legislature. The report concluded that allowing physician assistants to practice to the full extent of their education and training "is widely seen as an effective way to address issues of healthcare access, quality, and cost" and noted that physician assistants are more likely than physicians to practice in rural and underserved communities, where supervision requirements can impede workforce growth.

Given the Board's unique expertise in physician assistant licensure, regulation, and practice, we respectfully request that the Board place this matter on a future public meeting agenda to discuss potential stakeholder engagement, opportunities for collaboration, and the Board's anticipated role in supporting the Legislature's objective by initiating a comprehensive review of physician assistant practice agreement structures in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Thank you, in advance, for your attention to this urgent matter for our constituents.

Sincerely,



Roger Niello, Senator 6th District



Steven Choi, Senator 37th District



Heather Hadwick, Assemblymember 1st District

cc: Members, Physician Assistant Board
Juan Armenta, Esq., Member
Deborah Snow, Member
Dr. Veling Tsai, Member
Philip DaVisio, PA-C, Member
Bhavana Prakash, PA-C, Member
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