



February 17, 2021

West Virginia Legislature
1900 Kanawha Blvd. E.
Building 1, State Capitol Complex
Charleston, WV 25305

Re: Licensing and Scope of Practice Reform for Essential Health Care Workers

Dear West Virginia Lawmakers,

On behalf of Americans for Prosperity-West Virginia (AFP-WV) and AARP West Virginia (AARP WV), we urge you to permanently enact certain provisions of Executive Orders implemented by Governor Jim Justice. The Executive Orders cut needless red tape that stood in the way of our trusted health care practitioners being able to better address the growing public health challenges associated with the spread of COVID-19 and in the future.

Starting in March, Governor Justice executed several Executive Orders (EO) to expand the capacity of health care professionals to deliver care to patients suffering from COVID-19. EO 10-20 suspended requirements for supervision or presence of any other health care provider when anesthesia is provided by a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNAs). It also authorized full prescriptive authority to Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) without physician supervision. EO 7-20 empowered licensed physicians and physician assistants (PAs) from other states to practice in WV without attaining an additional license.

These reforms dramatically increased access to affordable care for West Virginians, especially families living in underserved communities. Allowing nurses to practice the full extent of their education and training empowers these essential workers to deliver significantly more care in rural areas. Furthermore, these reforms decrease the cost of health care by up to 17 percent.

Driven by the swift action from Governor Justice, healthcare facilities are dramatically hiring more physicians, nurses and PAs to meet the needs of their communities. However, all of these beneficial reforms are limited to the duration of the COVID-19 public health emergency declaration. Without additional action from lawmakers to make these reforms permanent by placing them in statute, patients will lose access to life-saving care when the emergency declaration ends.

State lawmakers must act to ensure that health care providers retain the legal authorization to continue providing essential health services to patients in need. Permanently codifying Governor Justice's health care reforms is a commonsense solution to help solving the state's long-term health care challenges. **AFP-WV and AARP WV urge you to allow CRNAs and APRNs to continue deliver patient care without physician supervision. In addition, we urge you to permanently authorize out-of-state telemedicine providers to serve patients without additional licensure requirements.** This will ensure more West Virginians receive the high-quality services they need in a timely manner.

Sincerely,

Jason Huffman
State Director
Americans for Prosperity-West Virginia (AFP-WV)

Gaylene Miller
State Director
AARP West Virginia