

May 10, 2021

Dear Senate President Peeler, Majority Leader Massey, Minority Leader Hutto, and Members of the South Carolina Senate,

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed how government red tape gets in the way of a rapid response and interferes with patients being able to get the care they need from those they trust quickly and efficiently.

Much can be accomplished when governments enable medical innovators rather than erecting barriers that impede their progress. Last year, Governor McMaster waived hundreds of rules in a race to fight the virus – including temporarily suspending certificate of need regulations. It was the right decision.

On behalf of our organizations and the broader public interest, we write urging you to make this temporary suspension permanent by swiftly passing S. 290. This legislation would repeal burdensome and counterproductive “certificate of need” laws that place unneeded restrictions on the number of available hospital beds and other critical medical supplies. S. 290 would better position our state’s health care system to meet the needs of South Carolinians by allowing medical professionals to buy more equipment, invest in new facilities, and expand existing facilities. By removing red tape, our health care providers can ensure South Carolinians have access to critical health care services and more effectively address COVID-19 and future public health crises.

When free from counterproductive rules and regulations, such as certificate of need laws, providers, and suppliers inside and outside the health sector have demonstrated they can innovate to create new and better solutions. Countless companies big and small have repurposed manufacturing facilities and accelerated the search for treatments and vaccines. Medical providers, patients, and plans have quickly moved to adopt telemedicine. By permanently repealing certificate of need laws, they could do the same in producing better outcomes, lower costs, and more consumer choices to make health care and coverage more accessible.

The debate today is between those who want to exert even more government control over our health sector and those, like us, who favor giving patients more choice and control and allowing the creativity we have seen in this crisis to flourish.

We welcome the opportunity to work with policymakers to shape a better, brighter health care future. And a good place to start is by passing S290.

Sincerely,

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