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September 28, 2021

The Honorable Raul Ruiz, M.D.
United States House of Representatives
2342 Rayburn Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Larry Bucshon, M.D.
United States House of Representatives
2313 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Subject: "Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act of 2021"

Dear Congressmen Ruiz and Bucshon:

We, the undersigned members of the Health Coalition on Liability and Access (HCLA), wish to express our sincere thanks for your leadership in introducing the *Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act of 2021*. This much needed legislation will ensure that victims of federally declared disasters and public health emergencies will have adequate access to medical care following a catastrophic event.

Following national calamities like a natural disaster, terrorist attack or pandemic outbreak, it is crucial for affected Americans to have access to adequate medical resources in a timely manner. Unfortunately, federal law does not provide adequate protection to health care professionals who spontaneously volunteer their medical services in these times of need, nor does it protect those volunteers who cross state lines to treat victims of such tragedies. Compounding this problem, the current patchwork of state laws that aim to encourage medical volunteerism are ambiguous and inconsistent, especially when applied to large-scale events. These issues create an environment where vital medical volunteers may be turned away or forced to limit their services at a time when their help is most needed.

Congress wisely saw fit to enact health care volunteer liability protections in the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act* last year, helping to ensure that volunteer health care professionals would be available to treat the patients most in need during the coronavirus outbreak. Unfortunately, that legislation was limited to the treatment of COVID-19, leaving victims of future outbreaks or disasters with limited access to life-saving volunteer care.

The *Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act of 2021* corrects these problems by applying the same volunteer protections from the *CARES Act* to volunteers responding to future disasters or public health emergencies. Providing these needed civil liability protections to licensed health care professionals who volunteer their time and skills to treat disaster victims will help ensure medical care is available in future emergencies. Doing so now, before the next event occurs, will also save valuable time in getting care

where it is needed most. Additionally, the bill only applies these protections to care delivered during the duration of a federal disaster declaration or public health emergency, limiting its scope solely to the times of greatest need.

We thank you again for your leadership role in addressing this matter before another major disaster or outbreak strikes the United States, and for your efforts to draw your colleagues' attention to this issue. We look forward to working with you to build support for this important legislation in the coming months.

Sincerely,

AMDA – The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine
American Academy of Dermatology Association
American Academy of Otolaryngology- Head and Neck Surgery
American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons
American College of Emergency Physicians
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Surgeons
American Health Care Association
American Medical Association
American Osteopathic Association
American Society of Anesthesiologists
American Tort Reform Association
American Urological Association
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
Cooperative of American Physicians
The Doctors Company
Illinois State Medical Society
ISMIE Mutual Insurance Company
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Medical Assurance Company of Mississippi
MLMIC Insurance Company
Medical Professional Liability Association
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Texas Alliance for Patient Access
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