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March 16, 2022

MEDIA CONTACT
Lauren Slepian – 609-744-4794

HCLA Applauds Senator Cassidy for Good Samaritan Advocacy

WASHINGTON, DC – The Health Coalition on Liability and Access today applauded Senator Bill Cassidy (R-LA) for his recent advocacy in support of medical volunteers during large-scale disasters and public health emergencies.

During the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee hearing on S. 3799, the PREVENT Pandemics Act, Senator Cassidy spoke in support of language that protects medical volunteers crossing state lines as currently drafted in S. 2941, the Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act.

“I would continue to push for Good Samaritan legislation,” Senator Cassidy stated in his comments during the markup of S. 3799.

The Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act would help encourage medical volunteers during declared disasters and public health emergencies by offering them protection from the threat of non-meritorious liability lawsuits that stems from practicing across state lines. It would also ensure that vital health care services are available to disaster victims without altering liability laws that may currently exist in a particular state.

Referring to executive orders and legislation at the state level that developed in the course of COVID-19 response, Senator Cassidy continued, “If a doctor, nurse, someone else goes to another state; during this epidemic they were given malpractice coverage, but in future epidemics it should be baked in so we don’t have to pass it.”

The bill offers patients and medical professionals a streamlined approach to facilitate access to care when it is needed most.

“Senator Cassidy’s recognition that future pandemic preparedness must include protections for medical volunteers is critical, as the threat of unwarranted medical liability lawsuits remains long past the current pandemic,” said HCLA Chair Mike Stinson. “We must learn from and implement the lessons learned from COVID-19 over the past two years, by passing federal legislation that enables health care providers to volunteer in support of desperately needed disaster care outside of their home state.”

The HCLA will continue to push for further bipartisan support of the Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act in both the House and Senate, reconciling inconsistencies in state laws to protect patients during future disasters.

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HEALTH CARE LIABILITY EXPERTS AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEWS
CONTACT LAUREN SLEPIAN, 609-744-4794

For more details, visit www.hcla.org. The Health Coalition on Liability and Access is a national advocacy coalition representing physicians, hospitals, health care liability insurers, employers, health care providers and consumers. HCLA believes federal legislation is needed to bring fairness, timeliness and cost-effectiveness to America’s medical liability system.