

October 21, 2013

To: Economic Affairs Interim Committee

Re: HB 525 – Criteria to determine if a board meets a public purpose

As a Licensed Clinical Laboratory Scientist and a past president of the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science-MT, I am writing this letter in support of continued licensure of laboratory professionals.

Clinical laboratory practitioners provide essential services that are a vital component of healthcare. They provide information that is critical to the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of disease. It is crucial to have clinical laboratory practitioners who are appropriately educated and competent to perform and interpret laboratory testing. Clinical laboratory practitioners are responsible for implementing processes that manage the entire scope of practice in the pre-analytical, analytical and post-analytical stages. Accurate and timely information is necessary to ensure optimal patient outcomes which are vital to patient diagnosis and treatment.

State licensure provides the best mechanism to assure that clinical laboratory services are performed with adequate levels of professional competency by having defined educational requirements, being certified, and requiring continual updating of their education. Licensure is important in setting these standards. It protects and defines the scope of practice for the laboratory professionals and excludes those who have not acquired the appropriate requisites for licensure. Personnel licensure is essential to protect the public from substandard laboratory results by prohibiting unlicensed individuals who do not meet the pre-determined competencies from practicing laboratory medicine.

Reliable laboratory test results are central to quality health care delivery and competent clinical laboratory professionals are essential in providing this vital component of healthcare.

I encourage this committee to continue to support licensure of Clinical Laboratory Practitioners.

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