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Coalition for Patients' Rights Opposes Unnecessary Regulation of Valuable Health Care Providers

Proposed Legislation Creates More Bureaucracy and Fails to Address Underlying Issue of Patient Education

WASHINGTON – The Coalition for Patients' Rights™ (CPR) today announced its opposition to the Healthcare Truth and Transparency Act (H.R. 5295) which would needlessly impose federal trade laws on qualified health care professionals and add another layer of bureaucracy to the health care system.

“This is bad legislation wrapped in feel-good language,” said Karen Howard, a spokesperson for CPR. “As health care professionals, we want patients to understand who is providing their care and what their qualifications include. But H.R. 5295 doesn't accomplish this; instead it would only create another obstacle to prevent patients from obtaining the quality health services they need.”

This legislation is considered by many care providers to be unnecessary and duplicative, as laws already exist in every state making it illegal for health care professionals to misrepresent their licensure, credentials, training, education, or clinical expertise to patients. “With so many other priorities in health care, it's wasteful for Congress to be working to pass a law that already exists across the country,” said Howard.

Furthermore, Coalition experts warn that many provisions in this bill are vague and could easily be used as a political tool against specific health care professionals who are fully licensed and educated to provide important care for patients. Unfortunately, efforts are underway by organized medicine to restrict the services provided by health care professionals who are not doctors of medicine (MDs) or osteopathy (DOs). This legislation is a likely output of a movement coordinated by the Scope of Practice Partnership (SOPP), a group of medical and osteopathic physician organizations established by the American Medical Association (AMA) and other medical groups, that aims to limit other health care professionals' scopes of practice. Scope of practice refers to the range of health care-related activities and services that professionals are educated, licensed and/or certified to provide.

The Coalition for Patients' Rights – which consists of professional organizations representing providers such as naturopaths, occupational therapists, advanced practice registered nurses and psychologists – believes that a cooperative effort to educate patients about their health care providers is the key to reducing confusion over whether they are or are not MDs or DOs. To that end, CPR is

working to help consumers understand who they can turn to for various health concerns. Additionally, information about every provider group in the Coalition, including training and licensing, is freely available on the website of each CPR member organization.

“We’re proud of our skills and the care we provide, and believe patients are able to choose the professionals who best meet their personal needs. Putting the Federal Trade Commission in the middle of communications between health care professionals and their patients doesn’t do anything to enhance patient care,” said Howard.

Health care providers who are not MDs/DOs have extensive training and complete years of education in their respective specialties. Additionally, they meet rigorous licensing and certification standards, and care for tens of millions of patients each year in the United States.

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About the Coalition for Patients’ Rights™

A national coalition of more than 35 organizations, the Coalition for Patients’ Rights represents more than three million licensed and certified health care professionals committed to ensuring comprehensive health care choices for all patients. It was formed in 2006 in response to divisive efforts by the Scope of Practice Partnership (SOPP), an alliance of medical and osteopathic physician organizations including the American Medical Association (AMA), which aims to limit the scopes of practice of other health care professionals.

The Coalition is comprised of a diverse array of health care professionals, including registered nurses, naturopathic doctors, psychologists, audiologists, physical and occupational therapists, advanced practice registered nurses (certified registered nurse anesthetists, nurse practitioners, certified nurse-midwives and clinical nurse specialists), optometrists and chiropractors.

For more information about the Coalition for Patients’ Rights, visit www.patientsrightscoalition.org.