

Florida Medical Association FACT SHEET



FOREIGN PHYSICIAN LICENSURE

SB

HB

FMA Contact: Jeff Scott (850) 251-2439

FMA Position

The FMA is opposed to physicians being licensed to practice medicine in Florida if they have not completed a residency approved by the ACGME (American Council on Graduate Medical Education). Allowing a year or two of supervision in lieu of a residency is not an adequate substitute. The proposal endangers Florida patients as it does not ensure that these physicians are adequately trained to practice medicine.

Background

Under current law, in order to become licensed as an M.D. in Florida, the applicant must have completed an ACGME approved residency. There are very stringent national standards for these residency programs, standards that ensure physicians receive thorough and appropriate training to practice medicine. Although there are a limited number of these residencies available, it is not appropriate to solve the issue of access to residencies by allowing non-ACGME approved post-graduate medical training programs.

The proposal to revive an expired licensure track for physicians would allow inadequately trained physicians to practice in Florida. This licensure track does not require the physician to complete any type of ACGME approved residency program. Although the physician is “supervised” by a Florida physician for two years, there are absolutely NO requirements for any type of training or education of the physician during this time.

Discussion

As Governor Jeb Bush stated in his veto message for similar legislation in 2005: *“the ‘externship’ program authorized by the bill bypasses well established procedures for accreditation of physician post-graduate medical training programs (residencies)...the bill, therefore, jeopardizes time-tested credentialing standards for licensure in Florida in a way that could ultimately affect patient safety.”*

Conclusion

This proposal should not be supported. In addition to it putting Florida patients at risk, it jeopardizes the integrity of Florida physician licenses as viewed by other states.

01/30/06