



Physicians Caring for Texans

House Committee on Public Health
Written Testimony on House Bill 2758 by Rep. Reggie Smith
Texas Medical Association
April 14, 2021

Honorable Chair Klick and esteemed members:

On behalf of more than 55,000 physician and medical student members of the Texas Medical Association, we support House Bill 2758 by Representative Smith to improve upon the important efforts to provide physicians with critical information regarding human trafficking. TMA believes continuing medical education (CME) on trafficking awareness is valuable and provides a holistic community approach to combating this societal blight.

Texas physicians are mandated to obtain 24 hours of CME for each license period. With growing demands on physicians, who must maintain board certification and meet other state-mandated training requirements, efficiencies are essential. By expressly limiting the requirement for this course to physicians with a direct patient care practice, the information will be available on the front lines where most appropriate and where it can make the most difference in the lives of those being trafficked.

This bill also will ensure the required course is approved and monitored in the same manner as all other CME courses required by the state, through the Texas Medical Board (TMB). Other areas covered are ethics, opioids, and optional subjects. By transferring responsibility for course approval from the Texas Health and Human Services Commission to TMB, the bill will align these requirements, expedite the review and approval of new courses, and provide consistent tracking of required course completion for physicians. TMB will be able to monitor the need for any subject matter updates and determine if those are warranted for repeat education in the future. Additionally, if only one course is available, the bill would not require physicians to retake the identical course repeatedly.

We thank you for taking these steps to improve the process of preparing physicians who encounter patients in need of support and a possible way out of modern-day slavery. We appreciate the opportunity to provide comment. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Troy Alexander, director, TMA Legislative Affairs, at Troy.Alexander@texmed.org.