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Legislation to Criminalize Physicians, Jeopardize Patient-Physician Relationship Have No Place in Health Care

Washington, D.C. (April 8, 2022) – Our organizations, representing nearly 600,000 physicians and medical students, firmly believe the trusted relationship between a physician and their patient should never be jeopardized by the actions of policymakers, and a physician should not be criminalized or penalized for providing care.

Our organizations have consistently [opposed](#) any legislation or regulation that interferes in the confidential relationship between a patient and their physician and the provision of evidence-based patient care for any patient. Patients must be able to discuss health issues like reproductive care, family planning and gender-affirming care with their trusted physician to determine together what care is best for them.

We reiterate that all patients must have access to evidence-based, comprehensive medical care, and that physicians must be able to practice medicine that is informed by their education, training, and experience. This includes reproductive health services and information and gender-affirming care.

We are deeply concerned that legislation and legal opinions across the country will endanger patients and clinicians by allowing private citizens and policymakers to interfere in health care decision-making. The patient-physician relationship, not politics, is the backbone of medicine.

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About the American Academy of Family Physicians

Founded in 1947, the AAFP represents 127,600 physicians and medical students nationwide. It is the largest medical society devoted solely to primary care. Family physicians conduct approximately one in five office visits -- that's 192 million visits annually or 48 percent more than the next most visited medical specialty. Today, family physicians provide more care for America's underserved and rural populations than any other medical specialty. Family medicine's cornerstone is an ongoing, personal patient-physician relationship focused on integrated care. To learn more about the specialty of family medicine, the AAFP's positions on issues and clinical care, and for downloadable multi-media highlighting family medicine, visit www.aafp.org/media. For information about health care, health conditions and wellness, please visit the AAFP's award-winning consumer website, www.familydoctor.org.

About the American Academy of Pediatrics

The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 67,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults. For more information, visit www.aap.org and follow us on Twitter @AmerAcadPeds.

About the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) is the nation's leading group of physicians providing health care for women. As a private, voluntary, nonprofit membership organization of more than 62,000 members, ACOG strongly advocates for quality health care for women, maintains the highest standards of clinical practice and continuing education of its members, promotes patient education, and increases awareness among its members and the public of the changing issues facing women's health care. www.acog.org.

About the American College of Physicians

The [American College of Physicians](http://www.acponline.org) is the largest medical specialty organization in the United States with members in more than 145 countries worldwide. ACP membership includes 161,000 internal medicine physicians (internists), related subspecialists, and medical students. Internal medicine physicians are specialists who apply scientific knowledge and clinical expertise to the diagnosis, treatment, and compassionate care of adults across the spectrum from health to complex illness. Follow ACP on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/ACP), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ACP), and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/ACP).

About the American Osteopathic Association

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA) represents more than 168,000 osteopathic physicians (DOs) and osteopathic medical students; promotes public health; encourages scientific research; serves as the primary certifying body for DOs; and is the accrediting agency for osteopathic medical schools. To learn more about DOs and the osteopathic philosophy of medicine, visit www.osteopathic.org.

About the American Psychiatric Association

The American Psychiatric Association, founded in 1844, is the oldest medical association in the country. The APA is also the largest psychiatric association in the world with more than 37,400 physician members specializing in the diagnosis, treatment, prevention and research of mental illnesses. APA's vision is to ensure access to quality psychiatric diagnosis and treatment. For more information please visit www.psychiatry.org.