



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF
H.2512, AN ACT RELATIVE TO TRUTH IN ADVERTISING and
H.2513/S.1500 AN ACT RELATIVE TO HEALTH CARE TRANSPARENCY
BEFORE THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH
JULY 14, 2025**

The Massachusetts Medical Society is a professional association of over 25,000 physicians, residents, and medical students across all clinical disciplines, organizations, and practice settings. The Medical Society is committed to advocating on behalf of patients, to give them a better health care system, and on behalf of physicians, to help them provide the best care possible. To that end, the MMS wishes to be recorded in support of H.2512, *An Act Relative to Truth in Advertising*, and H.2513/S.1500, *An Act Relative to Health Care Transparency*.

H.2512 would require any advertisement for health care services that includes the name of a health care practitioner to include the type of licensure issued. H.2513/S.1500 would provide clarity to patients who are seeking care from an orthopedist, ophthalmologist, or other physician by limiting the use of the word "physician" or other specialty titles (for example, anesthesiologist or ophthalmologist) to only those that are licensed by the Board of Registration in Medicine.

There is a wide spectrum of training and expertise among health care professionals. In a clinical setting, it is often impossible for patients to know whether the person providing their care is a physician or a non-physician such as a nurse, physician assistant, pharmacist, dentist, or dental hygienist. This creates a great deal of confusion for individuals receiving health care. All clinicians are integral members of the care team and play an important role in health care delivery, but patients should be equipped with accurate information to be able to make informed decisions about from whom they receive care.

A 2025 survey by the American Medical Association (AMA) confirms that patients are confused by the many types of health care providers. When asked whether it is easy to identify who is a physician and who is not just by reading what services they offer, their title, and other licensing credentials in advertising or other marketing materials, a full 40% of patients do not agree that it is easy. Additionally, confirming that patients want more transparency regarding the

credentials and qualifications of their health care providers, 84% percent of respondents believe only medical doctors should be permitted to use the title “physician” and 80% would support state legislation to require all health care advertising materials to clearly designate the level of education, skills and training of all health care professionals promoting their services. Finally, a full 85% believe only licensed medical doctors should be able to use the specialty titles at issue in this bill, like cardiologist, dermatologist, and anesthesiologist.

While confusion among health care providers is not a new issue, the need for this legislation is growing as an increasing number of non-physician health care providers may practice independently, and those with doctoral degrees present themselves to patients as doctors in clinical settings. Passage of these bills will help patients make more informed decisions about their health care by ensuring them that the “doctor” caring for them is indeed a physician governed by the Board or Registration in Medicine. It’s especially important that patients have clarity on who is providing their care, as AMA survey data shows that 95% of patients say it’s important for a physician to be involved in their diagnosis and treatment.

Health care providers have an obligation to inform the public of the qualifications and limitations of the persons making important medical diagnoses, pushing medications into an intravenous line, or using a scalpel. Nationally, most (at least 40) states have some truth and transparency law in place for health care. Massachusetts should join the majority of states by passing H 2512 and H.2513/S.1500, which would accomplish that goal and ensure that patients have the necessary information concerning who is providing their health care. The MMS urges the Committee on Public Health to report H.2512 and H.2513/S.1500 out of Committee favorably.