



February XX, 2022

Via Hand Delivery and Electronic Mail:
xxxxx@senate.virginia.gov

Re: Virginia and National Healthcare Community's Opposition to Permanently Reducing Training Requirements for Nurse Practitioner Autonomous Practice

Dear Senator [REDACTED]:

The Medical Society of Virginia, the American Medical Association and the undersigned medical societies ask you to oppose permanently reducing the years of clinical experience necessary for nurse practitioners to practice autonomously. [House Bill 1245](#) would repeal the sunset that allowed nurse practitioners with only two years of experience to practice autonomously during the COVID-19 pandemic; making a permanent change to the healthcare landscape in the Commonwealth before a single data point on the consequences of this temporary change has been collected.

The Department of Health Professions, the Board of Medicine, and the Board of Nursing produced a report on the effects of the independent practice of nurses in Virginia; however, that study only examined NPs with five years or more of clinical experience. In fact, one of the recommendations outlined in the report was to "Collect data on nurse practitioners who have completed two years of clinical experience prior to being permitted to practice without a practice agreement for comparison to the data on those who have completed five years of experience."¹

Proponents of the bill argue that decreasing the clinical experience for nurse practitioner autonomous practice would expand access to care. This claim is false. The report illustrates two critical truths about autonomous NP practice. The first is that the vast majority of NPs continue to practice in areas already served by large hospital systems and no shortage of primary care providers. When Virginia established autonomous practice, the overwhelming majority of NPs stayed in the jobs they already had. In fact, DHP workforce data illustrate that only 2% of NPs in Virginia open their own solo practices.² The second truth is that more than 30% of Virginia counties do not have a single autonomously practicing NP. The Board of Nursing noted that the DHP report did not conduct a comparative analysis of the Virginia healthcare landscape before and after that requirement went in place in 2018, and thus these comparisons were difficult to substantiate.³ Thus, claims that HB 1245 will be a panacea for healthcare access are false.

Physicians in Virginia and across the country implore you to ensure patients enjoy the highest standard of care. Please **OPPOSE HB 1245**.

¹ [Department of Health Professions Report](#)

² [Board of Nursing Meeting Minutes](#)

³ [DHP NP Workforce Data](#)



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