



JAMES L. MADARA, MD
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, CEO

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January 26, 2018

Alphonso David, Esq.
Counsel to the Governor
State Capitol, Executive Chamber
Albany, NY 12224

Re: AMA opposition to New York S.6800/A.8516

Dear Mr. David:

On behalf of the American Medical Association (AMA) and our physician and student members, I am writing to once again urge Governor Cuomo to **veto S.6800/A.8516**, which would substantially lengthen the statute of limitations for medical liability actions. Medical liability reform is a crucial issue, and this first-of-its-kind legislation would significantly weaken the liability climate for New York patients and physicians.

The medical liability system adversely affects patients in many ways. It reduces patients' access to health care – particularly high-risk procedures. It hinders patients' communication with their physicians. It adds to the cost of patients' health care expenses, and it forces patients to go through additional tests and procedures due to a system that encourages physicians to practice defensive medicine. Passage of S.6800/A.8516 would only exacerbate this problem for New York patients, likely adding thousands of dollars to average annual medical liability insurance premiums, which already rank among the highest in the nation.

The medical liability system also adds to the cost of patients' health care expenses, and forces patients to go through additional tests and procedures due to a system that encourages physicians to practice defensive medicine. This legislation would not only encourage defensive medicine, it would nearly require it, leaving physicians little choice but to subject their patients to potentially unnecessary procedures or referrals to specialists. When taken together, this legislation risks making the practice of medicine increasingly inaccessible and unaffordable.

As you know, a physician's impact is felt far beyond the exam room, reaching through local communities, producing a network of jobs and spurring local investment. New York's physicians are significant economic drivers, on average creating \$2.3 million in economic output, supporting 11.4 jobs and \$1.3 million in wages and benefits, and contributing \$121,536 in state and local tax revenues. Therefore, keeping the practice environment for New York's physicians strong will not only build the physician workforce and ensure patient access to care, but will also drive New York's state and local economies.

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Page 2

Based on all of the above, we strongly urge Governor Cuomo to **veto S.6800/A.8516**, and thank the Governor for his consideration of our continued request. If you have any questions, please contact Kristin Schleiter, JD, Senior Legislative Attorney, Advocacy Resource Center, at (312) 464-4783 or kristin.schleiter@ama-assn.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James L. Madara, MD". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "M".

James L. Madara, MD

cc: Medical Society of the State of New York