

April 27, 2021

The Honorable Doug Ducey
Office of the Governor
State of Arizona
1700 West Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Re: American Medical Association Opposition to House Bill 1457

Dear Governor Ducey:

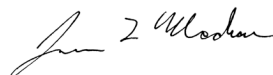
On behalf of the American Medical Association (AMA) and our resident and student members, I am writing to urge you to veto House Bill (H.B.) 1457, legislation that would criminalize the termination of pregnancy based on the reason for the termination. AMA member views on abortion are not homogenous, and it is our position that support of or opposition to abortion is a matter for physicians to decide individually, based on personal values or beliefs. We stand in vehement opposition, however, to any legislation that criminalizes the practice of medicine. H.B. 1457 does just that. It is an alarming overreach for the government to not only define appropriate medical practice, but also to attempt to regulate such practice through the use of criminal penalties. As such, we ask that you veto this bill.

Further, this legislation would severely compromise the patient-physician relationship, discouraging both physicians and patients from freely communicating about pregnancy for fear of criminal prosecution. The patient-physician relationship is foremost based on trust. Physicians must be free to have open and honest communication with patients about all aspects of health and safety and patients must feel safe knowing the information they share will be used only to inform physicians' best medical judgment. We believe it would be detrimental for the state of Arizona to legislatively undermine this trust and attach criminal consequences to communication within the patient-physician relationship.

Protecting the sanctity of the patient-physician relationship and clinical decision-making is a core priority for the AMA and a fundamental tenet of high-quality medical care. We strongly oppose any effort to criminalize physicians who provide legitimate medical services. We urge you to reject this unacceptable and dangerous governmental interference into the practice of medicine.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our views on this important matter. If the AMA can be of assistance, please contact Annalia Michelman, JD, AMA Advocacy Resource Center, at annalia.michelman@ama-assn.org.

Sincerely,



James L. Madara, MD

cc: Arizona Medical Association