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January 21, 2015

The Honorable Sam C. Mims
Chairman
Public Health and Human Services Committee
Mississippi House of Representatives
P. O. Box 1018, Room 104-B
Jackson, MS 39215

Re: AMA Support for House Bill (H.B.) 204

Dear Chairman Mims:

On behalf of the American Medical Association (AMA) and our physician and student members, I am writing in support of House Bill (H.B.) 204. This legislation would prohibit the conditioning of physicians' and other health providers' licensure on participation in health care programs or plans or on compliance with the "meaningful use" of electronic health records.

This is an important piece of proactive legislation addressing the inappropriate interference of regulation on physicians' autonomy. This bill will protect fair business practices by allowing physicians to negotiate with the health plans of their choosing. It will allow physicians to determine the caseload that is right for their practice. And this legislation will protect access to physicians in Mississippi by ensuring that doctors in your state are able adopt innovative health information technology that allows them to focus on caring for their patients, rather than meeting the rigid requirements that are part of the Meaningful Use program.

We are grateful for your commitment to ensuring that physician licensure is based on a physician's ability to practice medicine, and not a means by which to inappropriately regulate the practice of medicine.

We look forward to working with you and the Mississippi State Medical Association toward enactment of this H.B. 204. If you have questions or would like to discuss further, please contact Emily Carroll, Senior Legislative Attorney at emily.carroll@ama-assn.org or (312) 464-4967 and Annalia Michelman, Senior Legislative Attorney, Advocacy Resource Center at annalia.michelman@ama-assn.org or (312) 464-4788.

Sincerely,

James L. Madara, MD

cc: Mississippi State Medical Association