

May 30, 2024

Dear Chairperson Donovan and members of the HHS Committee,

My name is Michelle Leveillee from Coventry District 28, am a Certified Nurse Practitioner, belong to the Rhode Island State Nurses Association, the NP Alliance of Rhode Island, the American Association of Nurse Practitioners.

I oppose House Bill 8297 titled Related to Health and Safety- Medical Spas Safety Act

I oppose Bill 8297 because...

Under R.I. Gen. Laws (Title 5), it is said that APRNs are licensed, independent practitioners and after graduating from an accredited program, passing appropriate board examinations, and obtaining licensure by the state board of nursing, may "prescribe, order, procure, administer, dispense, and furnish over-the-counter, legend, and controlled substances as applicable to state and federal laws". Myself, and many of my NP colleagues hold DEA licenses, which now require an 8-hour training for renewal, as I recently went through that certifies we have read, reviewed, learned, and comprehend federal laws regarding controlled substances, their dangers, and, of the utmost importance, maintaining client's/patients' safety when it comes to these drugs. This applies to any product that is considered a controlled substance and utilized in the practice of medical aesthetics. Multiple drugs that are utilized in aesthetics and skin care are well within our capacity, competency, and scope of practice to be ordered/prescribed and administered due to this additional licensure we hold.

Furthermore, just as with any other on-the-job-training associated with one's professional position(s) observations by a physician or non-physician colleague, who has the expertise and appropriate preparation to carry said training(s), may sign off and certify that the trainee has attended a training, performed what is being trained on with models under observation, and will continue to perform under due diligence. Any medical professional, whether physician or non-physician who serve the public, (providing services that individuals voluntarily sign and attest to in informed consent forms), hold licensures, certifications, have acquired proper education/training should be and complete annual trainings, multiple, if possible, to keep up on the latest technology, medications, products, and safety standards to provide the soundest, most effective, and best quality care possible. To nurses and Advanced Practice RNs education, acquiring knowledge, and furthering our competence in what we do on a daily, whether that be working in a medical spa or in a hospital-setting, and is what drives us to be practical, highly qualified, and meticulous providers.

In this past year alone, multiple bills have come through our state's legislative process attacking the practice of nurses and APRNs, especially. Instead of raising the bar for RNs and NPs it seems as if we are going in reverse, which does not seem to make sense in a time where nurses are leaving the field in droves, due to various factors that we are all aware of. Now is not the time to further complicate the state of healthcare, with the overall shortage of physicians and providers in all fields of medicine in our state (although primary care being the most in crisis). Speaking specifically of dermatologists, the waitlist to see a dermatologist is months long! Just as the other bills have made clear, Nurse Practitioners help to fill in gaps in our healthcare system that will just

continue to grow as the numbers of physicians graduating from medical school, including in the field of dermatology, continues to dwindle. The value and importance of NPs does not seem to be quite understood yet, and that is extremely frightening in an already struggling healthcare system that is crumbling at the seams in our state, as well as many other states. If the concern of our fellow Nurse Anesthetists and Dermatologists is that there is “not enough jobs, money, or patients to go around”, re-evaluation of these factors is needed. Patients see the value of NPs and compliment the thoroughness, attentiveness, and compassion Nurse Practitioners take in caring for them, whether it be someone seeking to diminish acne scars on their face or others wanting to improve their overall health. For these reasons, I am asking you to oppose this bill in order for us to continue to take care of the lives we already do on a daily basis to improve the overall health and betterment of the residents our state.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to speak against Bill 8297. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Michelle G. Leveillee, MSN, AGACNP-BC, PGMT-BC