



Date: December 12, 2012

To: Members, Assembly Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee

From: Randy Minniear, Senior Vice President, Government Relations & Policy
Jessica Cohen, Director, Government Relations & Policy
Neil Eicher, Deputy Director, Government Relations & Policy

Cc: Nicole Brown, Assembly Democratic Office
Natalie A. Collins, Assembly Republican Office
David Price, Office of Legislative Affairs

Re: **A-2905 - Requires DHSS to coordinate physician workforce data.**

On behalf of the New Jersey Hospital Association and its members, we are writing to offer our support for **A-2905**, sponsored by Assemblyman Ruben Ramos (D-Hoboken), which requires the Department of Health and Senior Services to coordinate physician workforce data.

New Jersey is currently facing a significant physician shortage, most notably in the practices of primary care and obstetrics. The Council of Teaching Hospitals recently reported that by 2020 New Jersey will face a projected shortfall of over 2,800 additional physicians beyond the current physician graduate medical education (GME) projections. This will represent a 12 percent gap in the physician supply versus the likely population demand for services. Without the availability of primary and specialty physicians, patients will face significant barriers to accessing healthcare services and further strain an ailing hospital industry. With the implementation process of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) well underway, New Jersey must address the influx of nearly 900,000 new patients into the healthcare delivery system.

A-2905 will require the state and the healthcare industry to transmit key data regarding physician information that will allow the state to forecast key shortage areas in order to optimize the recruitment, retention, and distribution of physicians in the state. This information will provide the state with the ability to plan effectively for physician workforce development. In addition, this bill will document the physicians that currently take Medicaid patients. With the expansion of the Medicaid program scheduled for 2014, it is essential that New Jersey has an adequate network of physicians that accept Medicaid patients. This information could be used to promote more robust Medicaid networks for the health insurers that manage these networks.

We urge you to support this measure. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact us at (609) 275-4251.