

Please Support H.R. 1876/S. 781 the Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act of 2017

Request

Please support H.R. 1876/S. 781, *the Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act of 2017* introduced by Congresswoman Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) and Senator Bill Cassidy (R-LA) to shield health care professionals, including EMS practitioners, from liability under federal or state law when they volunteer their services during a federally declared disaster. This bill offers the needed protections for EMS and the patients they serve in response to catastrophic events.

Background

Over ten years ago, Hurricane Katrina devastated the southeastern seaboard and forever changed the lives of millions of Americans. In the aftermath of that disaster, there was a shortage of medical volunteers available to provide care to injured victims. Currently, **federal law** does not provide good Samaritan protection to healthcare professionals who spontaneously volunteer their medical services when disasters are unfolding, nor does it protect those volunteers who cross state lines to treat victims of disasters.

In addition, the current patchwork of state laws that aim to incentivize medical volunteerism are ambiguous and inconsistent. This legal environment results in volunteer health professionals being turned away by authorities or forced to limit their services.

H.R. 1876/S. 781 would provide narrowly-tailored, civil liability protection to licensed health care professionals, including EMS practitioners, who volunteer during federally declared disasters as well as:

- Ensure healthcare volunteers' ability to provide timely, high-quality healthcare services to victims of these disasters anywhere in our country.
- Enhance clarity and consistency regarding the patchwork of state laws that encourage medical volunteerism.
- Promote coordination between state and federal agencies and licensing boards following a disaster to coordinate volunteers and encourage the verification of medical volunteers' licensure as soon as possible.

Cost

No CBO score at this time.

Contact

To learn more about this bill or cosponsor H.R. 1876, please contact Meghan Stringer (Rep. Marsha Blackburn) at Meghan.stringer@mail.house.gov or Martha Cramer (Rep. David Scott) at martha.cramer@mail.house.gov. To learn more about this bill or cosponsor S. 781 in the Senate, please contact Mary Moody (Senator Cassidy) at Mary_Moody@cassidy.senate.gov.

Current Cosponsors

A list of cosponsors as of April 3, 2018, of H.R. 1876 and S. 781 is on the back of this document.

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