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TO: Members of the Assembly Committee on Health

FROM: Ann Zenk, Vice President – Workforce & Clinical Practice
Matthew Stanford – General Counsel
Kyle O’Brien, Senior Vice President – Government Relations

DATE: February 5, 2020

RE: WHA Supports AB 575 – Physician Assistant Licensure (CARES Act)

WHA is pleased to support AB 575 which removes regulatory prescription and complexity for physician assistants, physicians, hospitals, and health systems, and enshrines team-based care delivery principles and quality safeguards, including the continued, necessary involvement of physicians in the delivery of care by Physician Assistants.

Advancing team-based care delivery and optimal utilization of Wisconsin’s health care workforce to advance high quality, accessible health care are key priorities for WHA’s member hospitals and health systems. As health care has evolved, so have our health care teams. Physician Assistants are a key part of team-based care delivery that is central to the high quality care provided by WHA’s hospitals and health systems.

We appreciate the Wisconsin Academy of Physician Assistants efforts to seek our input on their proposal as early as 2018. WHA has had a history of developing and pursuing legislation to reduce unnecessary regulatory complexity and burden impacting modern, team-based care models while also preserving safeguards to preserve Wisconsin’s high quality care, including legislation that removes outdated regulations limiting physician assistant and nurse practitioner practice.

Working with our members, including WHA’s Physician Leaders Council made up of hospital and health systems CMOs and other physician leaders, WHA found areas of alignment and areas of concern with the Wisconsin Academy of Physician Assistant’s initial draft. Over the course of multiple weeks, at the Wisconsin Academy of Physician Assistants’ invitation, WHA shared language and ideas with the Academy to address initial concerns.

The end result of those productive discussions and modifications of the initial 2018 draft is this bill that we are comfortable in supporting as a good balance of reducing regulatory burden on physician assistants, physicians, hospitals, and health systems, while also preserving the important role of physicians in a team based care delivery model and other safeguards to preserve high quality care in Wisconsin.

If you have any questions, contact Kyle O’Brien, Senior Vice President Government Relations, at kobrien@wha.org or (608) 274-1820.