

October 21, 2011

The Honorable Jeffrey Sanchez
Chair, Joint Committee on Public Health
State House
Room 130
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Susan C. Fargo
Chair, Joint Committee on Public Health
State House
Room 504
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Rep Sanchez and Sen. Fargo:

The Massachusetts Radiological Society, Inc., (“MRS”) is very pleased to support H. 3515, An Act Relative to the Practice of Medical Physics. This legislation will ensure that medical physicists practicing in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are highly qualified, ensuring the utmost standards in patient treatment and care. Medical physicists calibrate medical radiation therapy devices, such as mammography and x-ray machines, to provide patients with the correct radiation dose to treat a particular condition. Any calibration error places patients undergoing radiation therapy at risk of suffering from radiation poisoning or continued illness caused by insufficient levels of radiation. Despite this highly technical work, medical physicists are largely unregulated and therefore perform calibrations without being licensed to do so. Medical physicists are currently licensed in New York, Florida, Texas, and Hawaii; state licensure legislation is currently being considered in Pennsylvania.

MRS is dedicated to serving patients and society by maximizing the value of radiology, radiation oncology, interventional radiology, nuclear medicine and medical physics by advancing the science of radiology, improving the quality of patient care, positively influencing the socio-economics of the practice of radiology, and providing continuing education. The establishment of a state board to regulate the practice of medical physics in the Commonwealth will improve the quality of radiation oncology and medical imaging care for cancer patients, and such a board has the full support of MRS.

We encourage you to support this important legislation, as it will ensure the highest quality standards for practicing medical physicists in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Sincerely,

Christoph Wald, MD, Ph.D.
President, Massachusetts Radiological Society

cc: The Honorable Katherine Clark
The Honorable James E. Timilty
The Honorable Michael F. Rush
The Honorable Robert L. Hedlund
The Honorable Christine E. Canavan
The Honorable Ruth B. Balser
The Honorable Carolyn C. Dykema
The Honorable John J. Mahoney
The Honorable George T. Ross
The Honorable Christopher G. Fallon
The Honorable Carl M. Sciortino, Jr.
The Honorable Denise C. Garlick
The Honorable Paul Adams