



February 15, 2019

The Honorable Cory Gardner
United States Senate
354 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Gardner:

On behalf of the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB), I am writing to express our support of **S. 221: *Department of Veterans Affairs Provider Accountability Act.***

The FSMB applauds the noble mission and dedication of the VA in serving the nation's veterans, and believes strongly that veterans and their dependents deserve the same level of quality care and appropriate regulatory oversight and accountability that is available to the general public. The sharing of detailed information from the VA with the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) and appropriate state medical board(s) to expediently and efficiently identify unsafe providers operating within the VA system as required in S. 221 is an excellent step toward achieving this goal.

Improved sharing with the NPDB and state medical boards will significantly help the boards protect patients, both within and outside of the VA system. Providers who have been deemed unqualified or unsafe to practice by the VA should not be allowed to practice outside of the VA, nor be able to conceal their disciplinary actions with discreet settlement arrangements. Proper notification of provider disciplinary proceedings will help ensure that unsafe and dangerous physicians are not allowed to treat patients outside of the VA.

Founded in 1912, the FSMB is the national non-profit organization representing the 70 state medical and osteopathic boards of the United States, its territories and the District of Columbia. The FSMB serves as a resource and voice on behalf of state medical boards and provides services and initiatives that promote patient safety, quality health care and regulatory best practices.

The FSMB is pleased to offer its strong support for S. 221, which will improve the quality and safety of health care both within and outside of the VA system. We commend you and Senators Manchin, Moran, Collins and Cassidy for your bipartisan leadership on this important issue and welcome the opportunity to work with you and Congress in support of the *Department of Veterans Affairs Provider Accountability Act.*

Sincerely,

Humayun Chaudhry, DO, FACP
FSMB President and CEO