

Testimony against H 5108, Howard Schulman, MD Re: not requiring international physicians to go through local residency training.

Hello,

My name is Dr. Howard Schulman. I apologize that I was not able to testify in person. I have been an adult primary care physician in Rhode Island since 1995. I am testifying against this bill because, to put the shoe on the other foot, as an experienced physician here for 30 years, I can't imagine myself practicing in another country without going through a local training program. As a primary care physician my most valuable skill is understanding the local healthcare environment and where I fit in.

This bill mentions primary care and psychiatry specifically, and it is these two areas that understanding the local healthcare environment is the most important. Possibly non-people-oriented in fields like pathology or radiology or anesthesiology, internationally trained physicians may be able to work successfully.

I'd like the Committee to be aware that passing multiple choice tests is no substitution to actually practicing medicine.

Also, the Committee members may be thinking that having these physicians trained out-of-country here may be better than having no one, but practicing medicine is a very high-stakes career, every second, and it will only take one or two Providence Journal articles about a bad outcome to make what this bill attempts to do look bad.

I am also imagining medical malpractice firms having a hard time issuing malpractice insurance to these physicians, given what Dr Staci Fischer and Neil Hytinen have testified to, pertaining to the difficulty in determining the adequacy of the training of these physicians from foreign countries. Possibly a physician who has been in practice a while may have a much better chance of success, but this bill will allow a newly trained student to start practice here.

And all these issues are on top of cultural and language issues these people will encounter practicing here.

I urge you to vote against this bill.

Thank you,  
Howard Schulman, MD  
general internal medicine  
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