

DATE: February 24, 2025

TO: RHODE ISLAND HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICE COMMITTEE

FROM: John Kawaoka, MD, Rhode Island Physician

SUBJECT: BILL H5351 – OPPOSITION STATEMENT

Dear Representatives on the HHS Committee,

I'm writing in strong opposition to Bill H5351 (Medical Aesthetics Practice Safety Act).

I am a dermatologist licensed in RI since 2008 and directly involved in residency training for physicians. Part of this training is in cosmetic practices. Some of the procedures are relatively straightforward, but the vast majority are not. Our residents spend years training to do these procedures safely and to deal with inevitable complications. Many of these treatments have a high risk for scarring and infection. Some can cause nerve damage, blood clots, and necrosis, among many other severe issues. These are complex procedures.

In line with the DOH, I have concerns that allowing medical spas further unregulated access to performing procedures on patients will result in more patient harm. Studies in the major dermatology journals have illustrated that this concern is not unfounded and that some procedures are best reserved for those with the most training and others should require physician oversight.

To be clear, I am not against non-physicians performing these procedures in general, but it scares me to hear how little training some of these practioners get and how little supervision there sometimes is. Please do not pass this bill.

Thank you,

John Kawaoka