

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR
Pain Management

Nursing

P.O. Box 15473 ❖ Lenexa, Kansas 66285-5473 ❖ 913/895-4606 ❖ aspmn@goamp.com

February 27, 2010

Re: ESHB 2876

Dear Members of the Washington State Legislature,

The American Society for Pain Management Nursing (ASPMN) commends the legislature for taking steps to address chronic pain through legislation **but is greatly concerned about the health and safety risks posed by ESHB 2876. We respectfully request that before you move this legislation forward that you include critical input from medical professionals in the area of pain management.** Pain is the number one public health problem in the United States. It is also the most common symptom that leads to medical care and leads to more than 50 million lost workdays each year, costing our economy an estimated \$100 billion in lost productivity.

ASPMN supports guidelines directing primary health care providers to “initiate transition and maintain oral opioids for patients with chronic (persistent) non-cancer pain to assess the effectiveness of treatment for functional improvement and pain relief”. However, ESHB 2876 does NOT provide the same right to pain relief for all patients, specifically; it potentially excludes people suffering from long-term chronic pain. This includes wounded veterans with amputations, elderly people with rheumatoid arthritis, people with fibromyalgia, back and spinal injuries, and many, many more. ESHB 2876 would establish rules that could exclude many Washington state residents from acute pain management “caused by injury or a surgical procedure” and further states that “special requirements are needed for opioid-dependent patients experiencing such acute pain.” It is grossly unfair and discriminatory to deny proper care to people who are already suffering simply because they are already being treated for existing pain.

Pain management must be delivered with an individualized, balanced approach using interdisciplinary methods and is not one size fits all - it is often a combination of therapies that achieves the best results. The ability of a patient to function and to maintain quality of life far supersedes the arbitrary decision to define a specific dose limit in prescriptive authority.

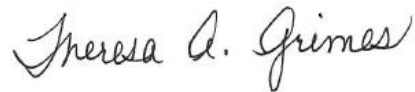
To ensure proper health care for your constituents, ESHB 2876 should be reviewed by pain management experts and stakeholders from the state of Washington, as well

as nationally, and we offer our help to you so this may be achieved. ASPMN upholds the necessity to afford adequate, evidence-based and fair access to care for those suffering acute, chronic (persistent), cancer and cancer-survivorship pain. ASPMN maintains that this bill, in its current form, will obstruct effective pain management for people in pain, cause needless suffering, put the health of your constituents at risk, and cost the state millions of dollars in lost productivity.

It is critical that you suspend movement on ESHB 2876 until the above concerns are addressed.

The mission of American Society for Pain Management Nursing is to advance and promote optimal nursing care for people affected by pain by promoting best nursing practice through education, standards, advocacy, and research. ASPMN stands ready to help you in any way we can as you address these important issues. Please feel free to contact me if I may be of assistance.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Theresa A. Grimes". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Respectfully yours,".

Theresa Grimes, ASPMN President, MN, RN-BC, FNP-BC, CCRN