

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR
Pain Management
 **Nursing**

April 3, 2011

The Honorable Mary Hayashi
Assembly Member
State Capitol, Room 3013
Sacramento, CA 95814

VIA FACSIMILE

RE: AB 507 (Hayashi) – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Hayashi:

I write on behalf of the Southern California Chapter of the American Society for Pain Management Nursing (ASPMN) to support AB 507, which would clean up the remaining obsolete or inconsistent parts of California's pain management policy. The ASPMN's mission is to advance and promote optimal care for people affected by pain by promoting best nursing practice. This is accomplished through education, research, standards and advocacy. ASPMN's goals are access to quality care, public awareness, professional resources, education and professional recognition. More information about the organization and its members may be found at www.aspmn.org.

Pain is the most common reason Americans access the health care system. Yet pain is still undertreated. The reasons for this are complicated but certainly inconsistent and obsolete policy impedes best practices at the bedside. AB 507 will address the parts of California's policy that remain barriers to appropriate treatment of pain.

Previous legislation began the work of improving the policy landscape for the appropriate treatment of pain, which requires a balance between "the legitimate need to protect public safety and public health through efforts to reduce drug abuse and diversion, and the imperative to address the public health problem of unrelieved pain."¹ Previous efforts to achieve this balance have included removing the requirement that prescriptions for Schedule II opioid analgesics be written in triplicate and establishing the California Controlled Substance Utilization and Review and Evaluation System. Other changes updated the definition of pain in certain parts of the code to be broader than just "severe chronic intractable" pain and to clarify the instances when a doctor can be disciplined for dispensing controlled substances.

¹ Mayday Fund, "A Call to Revolutionize Chronic Pain Care in America: An Opportunity in Health Care Reform," November 2009.

AB 507 would continue in the vein of previously accomplished work by clarifying when a pharmacist may be disciplined for dispensing controlled substances, conforming definitions of pain in the Pain Patient's Bill of Rights to the definition of pain in other code sections, and clarifying how the Attorney General's office may engage pain patients.

Making these changes are a good step toward ensuring that policy does not unduly inhibit the treatment of pain in California. Thank you for authoring this legislation.

On behalf of the members of the Southern California Chapter of ASPMN we submit this letter of support.

Sincerely,

Marsha Stanton, PhD, RN
Chapter President
Stanton_marsha@yahoo.com
732-770-7997 cell