

*The VOICE for the Vascular Ultrasound Profession since 1977*

February 21, 2017

Members of the New Hampshire State Senate  
Members of the New Hampshire House of Representatives The New Hampshire General Court  
107 North Main Street  
Concord, NH 03301

**RE: Opposition to House Bill 184, House Bill 334, and Senate Bill 139**

I am writing on behalf of the New Hampshire Registrants who are members of the Society for Vascular Ultrasound (SVU). SVU is a membership society dedicated to the advancement of noninvasive technology used in the diagnosis of vascular disease. SVU has a diverse membership of over 5,700 vascular technologists, surgeons, cardiologists, vascular lab directors, academics, students and other professionals involved in the practice of vascular ultrasound. Approximately 20% of our members are physicians.

Established in 1977, SVU is the only professional organization completely dedicated to the advancement of non-invasive vascular technology used in the diagnosis of vascular disease. The Society's success for nearly 40 years is based on the active engagement of our diverse membership of vascular ultrasound professionals. Our members are voluntarily credentialed in vascular technology and phlebology through the American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography (ARDMS) or Cardiovascular Credentialing International (CCI). Both credentialing agencies are accredited by national accrediting bodies.

It is critically important that legislators and the public understand that medical imaging and radiation therapy procedures have risks and improper application of ionizing radiation can be harmful both to the patient and to the person performing the procedure. Although sonography and vascular technology use non-ionizing radiation (i.e., high-frequency sound waves), it is not without risk, particularly when applied improperly. Physicians rely on the medical images and physiologic data obtained by the certified vascular technologist. If the examinations are not performed properly, the physician may make the wrong diagnosis or treatment decision based on incorrect information, leading to unnecessary and costly invasive procedures or the physician may discharge a patient without treatment that may save their lives or prevent a devastating vascular event.

Living in a state with many rural areas should not mean the citizens (or visitors) must settle for lower standards related to medical imaging and radiation therapy quality and patient safety. A patient should not

have to ask if the person who is about to perform a sonogram has had adequate education, training, and experience to competently perform the procedure. And, when a patient goes to a hospital or other medical facility, they simply expect that the healthcare providers (i.e., physicians, nurses, respiratory therapists, speech therapists, radiologic technologists, radiation therapists, sonographers, etc.) have met the standards established for each profession.

The common theme among these bills (HB 184, HB 334, and SB 139) is that they attempt to repeal or modify the existing statute rather than allowing the newly established Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy Board to consider and address perceived issues with the Act. Thus, CCI believes that all these bills should not be passed by the New Hampshire General Court.

#### **HOUSE BILL 184**

**SVU OPPOSES PASSAGE OF HOUSE BILL 184.** This bill would repeal the Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy Act, which was approved by the New Hampshire General Court and signed into law on August 9, 2016. The reality is that most of the individuals who are practicing within the medical imaging and radiation therapy professions in New Hampshire had already voluntarily become certified and registered by CCI or another recognized and accredited certification organization. The proposed bill devalues the hard work of these professionals by permitting the least common denominator (no certification) to become New Hampshire's standard and places your citizens (and visitors) at risk.

#### **HOUSE BILL 334**

**SVU OPPOSES HOUSE BILL 334.** This bill proposes an exemption for nurses and midwives by changing the definition of "sonography." An exemption should not be accomplished by changing the fundamental definition of sonography in the New Hampshire statute, but rather through the administrative rules that will be proposed and adopted by the New Hampshire Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy Board. The administrative rule process allows for public comment on proposed rules and the administrative rules can more easily be adapted to changes in medical imaging and radiation therapy technology and the health care system.

In addition, there may be other licensed health professions that will use point-of-care ultrasound (within their scope of practice) in limited, non-diagnostic roles. For example, point-of-care ultrasound is used for needle guidance (e.g., central arterial or venous lines) or assessment of a patient's immediate medical condition (e.g., nurse midwife or paramedic assessing whether a baby is in breech position, a paramedic checking for blood in the abdomen, etc.).

The recently formed New Hampshire Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy Board can consider requests and implement exemptions via the Board's existing authority to adopt administrative rules. Adding any needed exemptions through the Board's administrative rules could avoid having to seek additional legislative exemptions in the future, while ensuring those performing diagnostic medical sonography have completed the appropriate education, training, and certification examination.

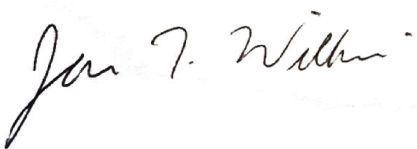
**SENATE BILL 139**

**SVU OPPOSES SENATE BILL 139.** While SB 139 does not directly impact diagnostic medical sonography, the bill would inappropriately remove the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT) as a certifying body for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). In the ARRT's place, SB 139 establishes the American Registry of Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologists (ARMRIT) as the certification organization recognized for MRI licenses in New Hampshire.

The ARRT is the largest certification organization for MRI technologists in New Hampshire (and the United States). The current statute recognizes that the ARRT is an accredited certification/credentialing organization for MRI. The existing statute also allows the New Hampshire Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy Board to evaluate, and if appropriate, recognize other national certification organizations through the Board's adoption of administrative rules.

Thank you for helping to protect the patients that sonographers, vascular specialists and radiologic technologists serve in New Hampshire. CCI is available to provide any assistance needed as these bills are considered by the General Court. Please feel free to contact me at: (800) 788-8346 or (301) 459-7550 or by e-mail: [jwilkinson@svunet.org](mailto:jwilkinson@svunet.org)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James F. Wilkinson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

James Wilkinson, CAE  
Executive Director