



## Texas Medical Board

### **JOINT STATEMENT ON CONCLUSION OF 86<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATURE**

The 2019 legislative session was a success for the Texas Medical Board (TMB). The staff and board worked hard to provide the information needed by the Legislature to pass our Sunset bill and adopt the majority of our legislative appropriations requests.

#### **Sunset**

The adoption of TMB's Sunset bill was the most important development for TMB this session. TMB began the Sunset review process over four years ago in 2015. Many Sunset items were adopted in 2017, but the full 12-year extension of TMB and numerous other items were not adopted until this year. As such, TMB will be up for Sunset review again in 2031.

The Sunset bill also creates expedited and alternative pathways for physician licensure in Texas. This will greatly help out-of-state physicians and board certified physicians become licensed here. The new legislation allows for additional examination attempt limits based on the amount of time the physician has been licensed in another state. TMB is happy to now have the legal means to help greater numbers of quality physicians come to Texas.

Additional Sunset bill changes include increased flexibility with non-disciplinary Remedial Plans, the means to legally remove certain dismissed complaints from licensee public profiles faster, and clarifying language on board appeals of State Office of Administrative Hearings findings of fact and conclusions of law. These changes will help to provide a better balance of protecting the public while also ensuring due process for licensees.

#### **Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR)**

The Legislature also provided additional funding to TMB after carefully reviewing our LAR items. TMB will receive additional funds to address technology, cybersecurity, and staffing needs. The Legislature granted TMB seven additional positions and two additional positions for the Texas Physician Health Program (PHP). All but two additional positions requested were granted. These new positions will greatly help TMB and PHP to provide faster services to the people of Texas and licensees.

Additionally, TMB received nearly 40 percent of the requested salary increases to address recruitment, retention, and turnover so we can continue to recruit the best talent across TMB and PHP. The requested increases came from an independent, third-party salary survey which showed TMB positions were paid an average of 9.7 percent below market value. The approved funding will result in almost every position receiving a salary increase.

#### **Conclusion**

We thank the Texas Legislature for taking the time to seriously and carefully listen to TMB regarding the Sunset and LAR processes. We also thank Governor Abbott for signing our Sunset bill. Finally, we thank our staff and all TMB-related boards for their tireless dedication to the TMB mission. Our mission is to protect the people of Texas. Our goal is to always fulfill our mission with maximum efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency. We look forward to 12 more years of doing just that.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sherif Zaafran".

Sherif Zaafran, M.D., FASA  
President, Texas Medical Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Brint Carlton".

Stephen 'Brint' Carlton, J.D.  
Executive Director, Texas Medical Board