November 7, 2013

LaSharn Hughes, MBA
Executive Director
Georgia Composite Medical Board
2 Peachtree St., N.W
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

RE: Cosmetic Laser Act Funding

Dear Ms. Hughes,

With more than 7,400 members, the Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) has been the leading voice for physicians in the state since 1849. MAG represents every physician in every specialty in every practice setting in Georgia. With this in mind, I wanted to express MAG’s support for the funding of the Cosmetic Laser Services Act. This is the first regulation of its kind in Georgia and is the product of consensus legislation.

MAG is a long time advocate for cosmetic laser regulations. In 1991, we adopted a policy that states that “MAG believes that laser surgery and therapy should be performed only by a licensed physician who meets appropriate professional standards as evidenced by training, experience and credentials. MAG further encourages and supports state legislation and rule-making by state medical boards in support of this policy.” We reaffirmed this policy in 2009.

New skin treatment devices and technologies include new lasers, radio frequency devices, ultrasound, and coolant devices that are intended to make permanent alterations in living tissue. It is important for these and future technologies be used in a way that best serves and protects the citizens of Georgia.

MAG recently enacted a new policy which states that “It is the policy of the Medical Association of Georgia that the definition of the practice of medicine be clarified to include that: The use of lasers, pulsed light devices, or any energy source, chemical or other modality that affects living tissue (when referring to the skin, anything below the stratum corneum), applied for cosmetic purposes, is the practice of medicine.”

Of the more than 40 states that currently have laser regulations, 35 have a statute or a medical board rule declaring the use of lasers or pulsed light devices the “practice of medicine” or “surgery.”

It is clear that Georgia needs cosmetic laser regulation to ensure patient safety. Please contact me at dpalmisano@mag.org or 678.303.9250 in the event you have comments or questions or would like additional information on MAG’s position.

Sincerely,

Donald J. Palmisano, Jr.
Executive Director/CEO

DJP:TY
cc: Marcus Downs, Director, Government Relations