



## **Congress Should Protect Medical Volunteers During Disasters**

When the coronavirus pandemic hit the United States, our healthcare providers rushed to the front lines, selflessly caring for sick patients without regard for their own safety or liability risk. Fortunately, Congress had the foresight to enact, through the CARES Act, limited civil liability protections for medical volunteers responding to the outbreak. These protections, however, will not help volunteers responding to future public health emergencies or disasters. Consequently, healthcare providers will once again need to choose between fulfilling their Hippocratic Oath and protecting themselves from civil liability when faced with future, large-scale events. The *Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act* would resolve this conundrum by providing healthcare volunteers with limited protection from lawsuits during federal disasters and public health emergencies.

### **“Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act”**

- Provides limited civil liability protection to healthcare professionals who treat victims of a federally declared disaster or public health emergency.
- Applies only to healthcare providers serving in a volunteer capacity.
- Protects medical volunteers who respond to disasters/health emergencies whether they volunteer as individuals or as part of a relief entity’s response efforts.
- Ensures that disaster victims will have more timely access to trained healthcare providers.
- Preserves a victim’s access to compensation in the event of an injury that results from an act or omission by the provider that constitutes willful or criminal misconduct, gross negligence, reckless misconduct, or a conscious flagrant indifference to the rights or safety of the victim.
- Enhances clarity regarding the patchwork of state laws encouraging medical volunteerism, thereby reducing risk and uncertainty for healthcare professionals.
- Eliminates the need for Congress to pass new protections for each future disaster or public health emergency.

### **Support the “Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act Today**

For more information, please contact our Government Relations Department at (301) 947-9000 or [governmentsrelations@MPLassociation.org](mailto:governmentsrelations@MPLassociation.org).