



## **SEMPA Statement on New Indiana Law Requiring a Physician On Site in Hospital Emergency Departments**

The Society of Emergency Medicine Physician Assistants (SEMPA) closely monitors legislation that could have an impact on emergency medicine physician assistants (EMPAs) and their practice. As such, SEMPA expresses concern regarding the recent legislation passed by the Indiana General Assembly and signed into law by the governor on May 5, 2023, [SB 400](#), requiring hospitals with an emergency department to have at least one physician on site and on duty who is responsible for the emergency department.

SEMPA agrees that emergency care provided in collaboration with board-certified, residency-trained emergency physicians is an ideal care model. However, the requirement of the physical presence is neither realistic nor cost effective at many hospitals across America, particularly Rural Emergency Hospitals and Critical Access Hospitals.

At a time when attrition rates in emergency medicine are escalating, interest in pursuing emergency medicine as a career is declining and all emergency departments are struggling to maintain adequate staffing, the passage of this bill is alarming. It could lead to increased costs and decreased emergency care access to the citizens of Indiana and potentially result in hospital closures in our nation's most vulnerable areas – rural America.

The reality is that many emergency departments in rural America are staffed by highly trained and experienced EMPAs who provide safe, evidence-based, high-quality care – often with telemedicine consultation with emergency medicine physicians – to those that would otherwise be denied access to this vital emergency care.

SEMPA will continue its unwavering effort to advocate for its members and the EMPA community at large to ensure that EMPAs are being represented accurately to the public and other emergency medicine stakeholders. SEMPA will also continue to provide education, critical skills training, guidelines and advocacy to EMPAs so that competencies are maintained at the highest level possible to serve patients in all academic, community and Critical Access Hospitals across this country.