



Speaker Therese M. Terlaje <senatorterlajeguam@gmail.com>

Guam Pediatricians Oppose BILL 112 LETTER Signed

1 message

Thomas Shieh, MD, FACOG <[redacted]> Thu, Jun 17, 2021 at 7:37 PM

To: "Senator Frank Blas Jr." <frank.blasjr@senatorfrankblas.com>, Senator James Moylan <senatormoylan@guamlegislature.org>, "senatorchrisduenas@gmail.com" <senatorchrisduenas@gmail.com>, "cridgell@guamlegislature.org" <cridgell@guamlegislature.org>, "senatormary@guamlegislature.org" <senatormary@guamlegislature.org>, "senatormunabarnes@guamlegislature.org" <senatormunabarnes@guamlegislature.org>, Senator Telo Taitague <senatortelot@gmail.com>, "senatorpedo@senatorjpterlaje.com" <senatorpedo@senatorjpterlaje.com>, "senatorjoessanagustin@gmail.com" <senatorjoessanagustin@gmail.com>, "office@senatorperez.org" <office@senatorperez.org>, "officeofsenatorshelton@guamlegislature.org" <officeofsenatorshelton@guamlegislature.org>, "senatortcnelson@guamlegislature.org" <senatortcnelson@guamlegislature.org>

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Dear Senators

I am asked to forward you the attached letter from Guam's Pediatricians. Many of whom are cc'd here. Dr. Del Rosario Chair of Pediatrics.

Sincerely,

Thomas Shieh, MD, FACOG
 Board Certified Fellow
www.ShiehClinic.com
 Office: (671) 648-2229 (BABY)
 Cell: [redacted]

This message is confidential. It is intended for the correct recipient, do not forward. If it is received in error, please delete. Thank you.

Apologies for typos and grammar.
www.shiehclinic.com

 **Opposition to Bill 112_Peds_signed.pdf**
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June 16, 2021

Dear Senators,

We pediatricians are writing to express our vehement opposition to Bill 112-36 and the proposed repeal of the Mandatory Arbitration Act. We firmly believe that this bill will have negative and potentially dangerous repercussions on our island's most vulnerable patient population: the children of Guam.

As pediatricians we are painfully aware that pediatric care on Guam is already limited due to our lack of pediatric specialists. Bill 112-36 will only worsen the situation. We try our hardest to provide the best, most comprehensive quality care for our young patients, and when specialist services are needed, we rely heavily on our adult specialist colleagues to provide pediatric services to the best of their ability, even though they may not be specifically pediatric-trained. We work together to do what we can, and we know that our patient families appreciate our joint efforts.

Now, as a direct consequence of this proposed Bill 112-36, the practice of medicine is changing, and for the worse. Dr. Erika Alford, our island's adult endocrinologist who has been generously willing to care for pediatric patients when we have needed her help both in the hospital and outpatient setting, has already stopped accepting pediatric consultations and will no longer be seeing any new or existing pediatric patients. This leaves children on Guam with diabetes and other endocrinologic disorders without a specialist to manage their condition. It is only a matter of time before other adult specialists do the same and start refusing to see pediatric patients as a result of Bill 112-36. Moreover, we primary care pediatricians would not be able to manage our patient's complex illnesses either, for fear of litigation and the risks associated with practicing beyond our scope of training as general pediatricians. Our patients and their families will be left with no other option than to seek specialty care off-island.

It frightens us to think of what will happen to our young patients and the overall state of pediatric care on our island as a result of Bill 112-36. The number of off-island referrals will skyrocket, families will suffer financially and mentally, and some children will inevitably not make it off island. Pediatric care on Guam will be severely compromised.

Our young patients do not get to have a say in this matter, so as pediatricians, it is on us to be their voice and to advocate for them. We implore you to listen and carefully consider our concerns. We do not support Bill 112-36 and call for its withdrawal, for the sake of our young patients and their health.

Below please find additional individual testimonials in support of our joint letter.



Amanda del Rosario, MD FAAP
Pediatrician, American Medical Center
Pediatric Dept Chairperson, Guam Memorial Hospital

The legislation proposed to repeal the current Mandatory Arbitration Act is truly creating a threatening climate, a dark cloud over those of us practicing medicine in Guam. This will worsen the healthcare shortage crisis we face, especially with specialists. Poor people who can't afford to leave island for healthcare will suffer the most. Does the author of the proposed legislation not realize that? The proposed new law will create an environment where defensive medicine is the norm. Physicians will feel obliged and compelled to perform more diagnostic testing. The number of labs and x-rays ordered will go up and will do so quickly. It will not be driven by a real need, but by fear of lawsuits. It will drive up the cost of healthcare insurance. The long proven best practice of conservative management will no longer be acceptable due to the fear of litigation over a delayed diagnosis. Is that what we want on Guam?

Arbitration works for everyone. It lowers the costs of the legal system and the health care system. It helps recruit much-needed providers and keeps our health insurance costs reasonable. It hastens the legal process. We saw draft legislation that addressed the cost of arbitration. Where did it go? Find it and bring it back.

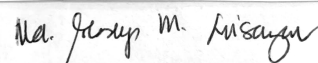


Ramel A. Carlos, MD

Believe us when we say that once this arbitration law is repealed and changed into something that will make it easier for patients to seek redress over the simplest of things, our on island adult subspecialists who have been sharing with us their knowledge will most likely refuse to consult with us on behalf of our patients, thereby forever changing the pediatric norm of practice on island. Those children who through no fault of their own cannot see a pediatric nephrologist or endocrinologist because they have no means to go off island will also be denied access to expert care from an adult subspecialist because these physicians will be afraid to offer their services because it was not what they have trained for. It is ironic that the very people you all want to protect are going to be the same people who will suffer the most from this.



Ma. Gladys Linsangan, M.D. FAAP
Board Certified American Board of Pediatrics



On a personal and professional note, I believe that patient care needs a lot of team effort - attending doctor, specialists, nurses, and other clinical staff. In Guam, we are faced with a lack of healthcare providers, especially Pediatric sub-specialists. As a general pediatrician and hospitalist, it is very difficult to try and manage complex illnesses/conditions without the help of specialists. I have patients who need Pediatric Hematology/Oncology, Rheumatology, Endocrinology, Nephrology, Cardiology care - they could not go off island due to financial constraints, lack of support persons, or due to the limitations from the current pandemic. Oftentimes, I have to go that extra mile to try and help my patients, including management of conditions outside my scope of training. As much as I want to, I could not do it alone. I need to work with other healthcare providers, especially the ones with subspecialty expertise. Some adult specialists are currently helping us out, but it might not be the case in the near future. What will then happen to our island's children?

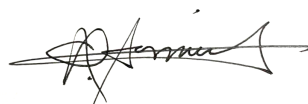
Please believe us that Bill 112-36 is not the answer for healthcare improvement in Guam.



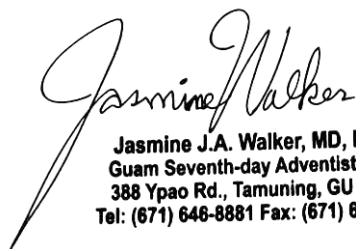
Milliecor Fojas, MD FAAP
Pediatrician, American Medical Center



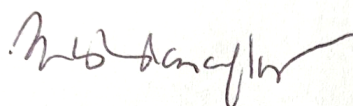
Michael Um, MD FAAP
One Love Pediatrics



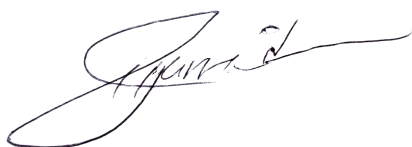
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