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May 31, 2024

Governor Gavin Newsom  
1303 10th St., Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom,

The American Academy of Neurology (AAN), is the world's largest association of neurologists and neuroscience professionals, with over 40,000 members. The AAN's mission is to enhance member career fulfillment and promote brain health for all. A neurologist is a doctor with specialized training in diagnosing, treating, and managing disorders of the brain and nervous system such as Alzheimer's disease, stroke, concussion, epilepsy, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, headache and migraine.

The AAN writes to express our strong support for SB 357, which seeks to remove outdated language from the Vehicle Code that discriminates against specific neurologic conditions, including epilepsy, and to protect the doctor-patient relationship by giving physicians greater discretion when reporting patients to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

SB 357 will amend the Health and Safety Code and the Vehicle Code with an evidence-based, physician-driven program to:

1. Give doctors the discretion to report any conditions they believe will impair a patient's ability to drive, by removing language that discriminates against specific conditions, including epilepsy.
2. Allow, but not require doctors, to make such reports.
3. Protect the doctor-patient relationship.

Current law discriminates against drivers with epilepsy and other conditions by requiring physicians to automatically report these drivers to the DMV. Research has shown that these requirements can result in patients withholding crucial information from their doctors and not seeking the care they need, out of fear of losing their licenses. When a person with epilepsy withholds such critical information from their doctor, they jeopardize their access to care, risking an increase in seizure activity or even a loss of seizure control. Such lost access to care can result in injury and even death.

Patients and doctors must be able to communicate in a safe and trusted environment. By refining the circumstances under which physicians are required to report patients, SB 357 seeks to maintain appropriate public safety standards without jeopardizing access to care for individuals with epilepsy and other conditions.

SB 357 has passed both chambers of the Legislature with unanimous, bipartisan support. On behalf of the AAN, our 40,000 members, and their patients, we urge

you to sign SB 357. Thank you for your consideration, please don't hesitate to contact Grant Niver, AAN's State Affairs Manager, at [gniver@aan.com](mailto:gniver@aan.com) with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carlayne Jackson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carlayne E. Jackson, MD, FAAN  
President, American Academy of Neurology