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October 21, 2019

The Honorable Bill Cassidy MD
U.S. Senate
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Angus King
U.S. Senate
133 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cassidy and Senator King:

On behalf of the more than 82,000 members of the American College of Surgeons, I would like to express our support for the *Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act of 2019* (S. 1350), legislation that would ensure disaster victims' access to medically necessary care in a federally declared emergency.

Rapid medical response in a disaster can greatly decrease loss of life and improve outcomes for patients who desperately need assistance. Surgeons with training in trauma and critical care, play a major role in the health care community's response to most disaster situations.

Due to inconsistent state laws and lack of federal policy, it is often unclear whether protections against unnecessary lawsuits exist for medical volunteers who cross state lines. Unfortunately, this uncertainty disincentivizes physicians from volunteering and in some cases, trained and qualified professionals have been turned away.

S. 1350 would provide volunteer health professionals with the same level of civil immunity they receive in their home state when providing care in a federally declared emergency. Removing barriers that prohibit licensed surgeons and other qualified physicians from voluntarily administering medically necessary care during disasters will ensure access to high-quality surgical services in the event of a crisis.

Thank you for your efforts and leadership on this issue, ACS strongly supports the *Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act*.

Sincerely,

David B. Hoyt, MD, FACS
Executive Director

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