



June 12, 2019

The Honorable J.B. Pritzker
Governor, State of Illinois
Office of the Governor
207 State House
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Dear Governor Pritzker:

On behalf of the physician members of the Illinois State Medical Society (ISMS), I strongly urge you to sign Senate Bill 1239 into law. Senate Bill 1239 amends the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act to close a loophole that allowed incidents of child abuse to go uninvestigated, and this bill is an important endeavor to protect the children of the State of Illinois.

Under current law, the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is only required to take reports of and investigate alleged abuse perpetrated by the child's parent, a member of the child's immediate family, a person responsible for the child's welfare, an individual residing in the same home as the child, or a paramour of the child's parent. As a result, abuse committed by other persons, for example, a child's uncle or a neighbor, is outside of the purview of the DCFS and thus it is not required to investigate such abuse because of a technicality. Although reports of abuse may be given to local law enforcement, DCFS is a logical recipient of those reports as well.

Senate Bill 1239 fixes this loophole by requiring the DCFS to refer those reports that fall outside of its purview to the appropriate local law enforcement agency for consideration of criminal investigation or otherwise. This places limited additional burdens on DCFS, as it already has reporting intake mechanisms in place, and local law enforcement agencies are similarly currently able to receive such reports.

There is no opposition to Senate Bill 1239 and it passed both chambers unanimously.

On behalf of the physicians of Illinois, ISMS respectfully asks that you sign Senate Bill 1239 into law.

Sincerely,

Richard C. Anderson, M.D.
Chair, Board of Trustees
Illinois State Medical Society

cc: Paul E. Pedersen, M.D.
Robert W. Panton, M.D.
Alexander R. Lerner