

SUPPORT SB109 (Feigenholtz) - HEALTH SURROGATE- POLST CHANGES

Completing a POLST form with a health care practitioner is the gold standard to empower patients to express their healthcare decisions. SB109 aligns Illinois with national standards for POLST procedures.

SB109 aligns Illinois state law with national standards by removing the witness signature.

- POLST stands for Practitioner Orders For Life Sustaining Treatment.
- National POLST establishes standards and endorses states that comply with POLST requirements including removal of the witness signature requirement.
- Illinois is **one of only two states** that has a witness requirement for state sanctioned POLST forms, making it a national outlier. Illinois has been at the forefront of amending statute to achieve full alignment with national standards – **it is time to do the same with POLST.**
- 43 states utilize POLST documents.

The rights of vulnerable citizens ARE PROTECTED when the witness signature is removed.

- The POLST form is **optional** and **only appropriate** for patients with an advanced life-threatening illness.
- A patient who wants to receive life-sustaining treatment may choose **not** to have a POLST form. If that is the case, full treatment (such as CPR and other life-saving measures) are automatically administered.
- A patient or their proxy **CANNOT complete a valid POLST form on their own**. A valid POLST form must be discussed and **signed by both the patient/proxy and their health care practitioner**.

ALL Illinois Citizens will BENEFIT from SB109:

- **Reinforces** that a POLST form is voluntary, by expressly stating that a **POLST form shall not be a requirement for admission** to any facility or a precondition to the provision of services and that **an individual may void his/her POLST form at will**.
- **Removes the barrier** when a health care surrogate enrolls a patient in hospice from their home or a nursing home.
- **Protects** a non-decisional individual when their health care surrogate wishes to change their POLST form.
- **Aligns Illinois** with national standards for POLST form.

ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING SB0109

- Illinois State Medical Society
- Illinois State Bar Association
- Illinois Health & Hospital Association
- Illinois Hospice & Palliative Care Organization
- IL Medical Directors Association: Illinois Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine
- Illinois HomeCare & Hospice Council
- Illinois Organization of Nurse Leaders
- Illinois Academy of Family Physicians
- Advocate Aurora Health
- Northwestern Medicine
- Joliet Area Community Hospice & Palliative Care
- Northern Illinois Hospice
- VITAS Hospice



