

## Self-Referral Bill Could Cause Major Problems in PA

The services physicians can provide in their offices and their financial relationships with other health care providers could be severely limited by a bill that is slated for a vote by the House Insurance Committee on Tuesday, March 23.

Pennsylvania Medical Society (PAMED) legislative experts expect [House Bill 247](#)—originally written as a certificate of need (CON) and self-referral bill—to be amended to only address self-referral.

The current draft of the Pennsylvania legislation severely restricts the ability of physicians and certain other health care professionals to refer patients to entities with which they have a financial relationship, either ownership or compensation. It mirrors a Maryland self-referral law that has been problematic.

PAMED has several concerns with the bill as it is currently drafted. Loose language and insufficient exceptions may result in unintended consequences. For example, there are questions as to whether physicians would be required to be in the same room with a technician taking an X-ray and whether physician ownership of ambulatory surgery centers is permitted.

If interpreted consistent with the Maryland law, only single specialty radiology practices would be able to provide MRIs, CT scans, and radiation therapy in their offices.

PAMED opposes the proposed self-referral restrictions and is working with legislative staff and physician specialty societies to address the many problems created by the legislation.