

**Meeting of the Montana Economic Affairs Interim Committee**

**October 23, 2013**

**ASRT Statement in Support of Continuance of the  
Montana Board of Radiologic Technologists**

Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Montana Economic Affairs Interim Committee:

The American Society of Radiologic Technologists is a national organization representing more than 152,000 medical imaging and radiation therapy professionals and serves as the parent organization of our affiliate society, the Montana Society of Radiologic Technologists. We appreciate the opportunity to comment during the HB 525 review process and highlight the importance of preserving the role and responsibilities of the Montana Board of Radiologic Technologists.

The MBRT makes sure that the public and health care consumers who undergo radiological procedures are treated by radiologic technologists who meet the standard for licensure. It also makes sure that radiologic technologists maintain their standards through periodic review of their renewal qualifications. In addition, the MBRT ensures that radiologic technologists are granted a license based on the completion of a rigorous educational process and successful completion of a competency-based examination. In short, the MBRT ensures that radiologic technologists are clinically competent and can provide patients in Montana with the best care possible.

The purpose of the MBRT is to protect the citizens of Montana from poorly performed medical imaging and radiation therapy procedures. The board oversees the requirements for individuals who perform radiological procedures and carefully reviews the qualifications and credentials of individuals applying for a license.

Why is this so important? Most medical imaging procedures use ionizing radiation (a known carcinogen) to create x-rays, computed tomography scans and nuclear medicine scans. Physicians rely on these images to diagnose illness and disease in patients. However, this

technology can harm patients if unskilled personnel operate radiological equipment. As you can see, it is crucial to have an organization oversee the personnel who this equipment, and the MBRT has successfully filled that role for the citizens of Montana.

Thirty-nine states currently license or have standards in place to assess the qualifications of radiographers who create x-ray images. ASRT is working with our affiliate societies in the 11 states that do not have standards to establish licensure programs for radiologic technologists and radiation therapists. Additionally, ASRT supports federal standards that would assure that imaging examinations paid for with taxpayer dollars through Medicare are performed by qualified individuals. Furthermore, concerns about radiation exposure to patients and the increasing cost of health care have spurred many states to strengthen standards for medical imaging and radiation therapy professionals.

ASRT understands and appreciates the state's review of licensure boards to ensure that licensure fees are not unreasonable and state resources are allocated appropriately. Moreover, we believe it is prudent for the state to regularly review radiologic technologist standards to ensure that they meet the ultimate goal of protecting patients and the public from the unscrupulous use of medical radiation by untrained individuals. As a result, on behalf of the 1,260 registered radiologic technologists in Montana, ASRT respectfully requests that the Economic Affairs Interim Committee recommends the continued existence of the Montana Board of Radiologic Technologists to assure that Montana's patients receive safe, high-quality medical imaging and radiation therapy procedures performed by qualified individuals.