



# Louisiana Society of Addiction Medicine

*A Chapter of American Society of Addiction Medicine*

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May 20, 2024

The Honorable Phillip R. DeVillier  
Speaker of the Louisiana House of  
Representatives  
900 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

## Re: LASAM's Opposition to SB 276, Relating to Criminalizing Abortion Inducing Drugs

Dear Speaker DeVillier:

On behalf of the Louisiana Society of Addiction Medicine (LASAM), the medical specialty society representing physicians and other clinicians in Louisiana who specialize in the prevention and treatment of addiction, thank you for the opportunity to comment on this critical issue. **We write today to express our opposition to SB 276**, which would criminalize the possession of mifepristone and misoprostol. As healthcare practitioners, we feel that this bill represents a legislative overreach that strips away highly sensitive and personal decisions from patients and medical professionals. Further, we believe that this bill goes against the spirit of the drug scheduling system, which is designed to classify substances based upon their danger, potential for misuse, and medical benefits.

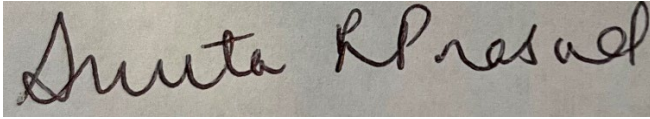
The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) has publicly stated its opposition to legislative interference into the patient-clinician relationships within the realm of reproductive health.<sup>1 2</sup> We affirm our support for ASAM's position in our opposition to harmful legislation like SB 276. Clinicians practicing in good faith should never be placed in the untenable position of delivering evidence-based care to their patients or violating state law and risking prosecution.<sup>3</sup> Instead, reproductive health decisions must remain private between patients and their clinicians. Abortion is safe and essential healthcare. As such, patients must be able to access medications such as mifepristone which have been utilized in medicine for decades.<sup>4 5</sup>

Most importantly, many of our members care for pregnant patients with substance use disorder (SUD) who already face intense stigma and barriers<sup>6</sup> accessing evidence-based treatment for their condition. We worry that this bill will only perpetuate those barriers and dissuade pregnant people with SUD from seeking treatment, leading to worsened outcomes for these patients. Instead of criminalizing medications like mifepristone which have demonstrated medical efficacy, lawmakers should instead focus on enhancing access to lifesaving medications for pregnant people, such as medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD). As was stated, we must facilitate a policy environment that empowers practitioners' discretion to provide the best care possible for pregnant patients, rather than constraining them. LASAM stands ready to assist in that regard.

Simply put, SB 276 represents a clear and worrying interference in the patient-clinician relationship that will negatively impact populations that we serve. **As such, we oppose this**

**legislation and urge representatives to vote against its ultimate passage.** Please do not hesitate to contact me at [smita.prasad@gmail.com](mailto:smita.prasad@gmail.com) if you have any questions or concerns. We are happy to assist and consult.

Sincerely,

A rectangular image showing a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature reads "Smita Prasad" in a cursive script.

Smita Prasad, MD, MBA, MPH, FASAM  
President, Louisiana Society of Addiction Medicine

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<sup>1</sup> ASAM - American Society of Addiction Medicine. (2022). *Substance Use and Substance Use Disorder Among Pregnant and Postpartum People*. asam.org. <https://www.asam.org/advocacy/public-policy-statements/details/public-policy-statements/2022/10/12/substance-use-and-substance-use-disorder-among-pregnant-and-postpartum-people>

<sup>2</sup> ASAM - American Society of Addiction Medicine. (2022). *ASAM Joins ACOG, AMA, and Other Health Care Organizations in Joint Statement in Opposition to Legislative Interference*. asam.org. <https://www.asam.org/news/detail/2022/07/07/asam-joins-acog-ama-and-other-health-care-organizations-in-joint-statement-in-opposition-to-legislative-interference>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Center for Drug Evaluation and Research. (2023). *Information about Mifepristone for Medical Termination of Pregnancy Through Ten Weeks Gestation*. U.S. Food and Drug Administration. <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/postmarket-drug-safety-information-patients-and-providers/information-about-mifepristone-medical-termination-pregnancy-through-ten-weeks-gestation>

<sup>5</sup> Resneck Jr., J. (2024). *Reducing access to mifepristone would harm patients*. American Medical Association. <https://www.ama-assn.org/about/leadership/reducing-access-mifepristone-would-harm-patients>

<sup>6</sup> ASAM - American Society of Addiction Medicine. (2022). *Substance Use and Substance Use Disorder Among Pregnant and Postpartum People*. asam.org. <https://www.asam.org/advocacy/public-policy-statements/details/public-policy-statements/2022/10/12/substance-use-and-substance-use-disorder-among-pregnant-and-postpartum-people>