

**MEDICAL BOARD STAFF REPORT**

DATE REPORT ISSUED: January 5, 2009  
SUBJECT: Written Examination Passing Scores  
STAFF CONTACT: Anita Scuri/Kurt Heppler

**REQUESTED ACTION:**

Make a motion to reaffirm the Board's past practice of accepting the passing score set by the Federation of State Medical Boards as its own passing score on all steps of the USMLE.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the adoption of the above motion.

**BACKGROUND:** One of the requirements for an applicant for a physician's and surgeon's certificate is the successful completion of steps I, II, and III of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE). The USMLE is sponsored by the Federation of State Medical Boards and the National Board of Medical Examiners (referred to here as "FSMB"). Section 2177 of the Business and Professions Code requires a passing score for an entire examination or for each part of the required licensing examination, as established by the Board. The 2006 amendment to Business and Professions Code section 2177 limits the number of times an applicant can take step III of the USMLE for licensure in California. The 2007 amendment to the same section contains the sole exception to the limit.

The Board does not administer or score the USMLE. Rather, the Board's longstanding practice is to accept the passing score set by the FSMB. With this proposed action, the Board seeks to reaffirm its policy of accepting the passing score set by the FSMB.

**ANALYSIS:** The Board anticipates that the issue of the passing score will become more prevalent as time passes, given the 2006 and 2007 amendments to Business and Professions Code section 2177. This proposed action would reaffirm the Board's long-standing practice of using the passing score set by the FSMB as the Board's passing score for each part of the USMLE examination.

**FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

No fiscal impact.