



**Testimony of the  
Connecticut Orthopaedic Society and the Connecticut State Medical Society  
In opposition of  
House Bill 5443 *AN ACT REQUIRING PODIATRISTS TO BE BOARD QUALIFIED*  
Presented to the Public Health Committee  
February 20, 2013**

Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson and members of the Public Health Committee, my name is Mike Aronow, an orthopaedic surgeon in the Hartford area who subspecializes in the treatment of foot and ankle disorders. I am also a member of the Board of Directors of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society (COS), who I represented between 2005 and 2007, when the Department of Public Health convened a Podiatric Ad Hoc Committee and subsequent Podiatric Arbitration Panel, whose recommendations with respect to ankle scope of practice for Connecticut podiatrists are reflected in the current Sec. 34. Section 20-54 of the general statutes.

I am speaking here today on behalf of the more than 250 orthopaedic surgeon members of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society and almost 7,000 physicians and physicians in training of the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS) all in opposition to House Bill 5443, An Act Requiring Podiatrists to be Board Qualified, as it is currently worded: *“That section 20-54 of the general statutes be amended to allow only a licensed podiatrist who is qualified by the American Board of Podiatric Surgery to engage in the medical treatment of the ankle.”*

We would; however, support a modified version of the bill with more specific language that would accomplish what we believe is the intent of House Bill 5443. This proposed new language would be *“That section 20-54(b) of the general statutes be amended by deleting the words **“or the American Board of Podiatric Orthopedics and Primary Podiatric Medicine”** from **“A licensed podiatrist who is board qualified or certified by the American Board of Podiatric Surgery or the American Board of Podiatric Orthopedics and Primary Podiatric Medicine may engage in the medical and nonsurgical treatment of the ankle and the anatomical structures of the ankle”**”*

The reasons for this request are as follows.

1. We have no objection to what we assume is the intent of House Bill 5443, that the American Board of Podiatric Surgery be the only Board from which board qualification or board certification would allow a licensed podiatrist in Connecticut

to engage *in the medical and nonsurgical treatment* of the ankle and the anatomical structures of the ankle.

2. We want to make certain that with respect to the *surgical* treatment of the ankle, that
  - a. Board qualification by the American Board of Podiatric Surgery is not being considered as a substitute for board certification in Sec. 34. Section 20-54(d-f), and
  - b. Board qualification by the American Board of Podiatric Surgery in Foot Surgery is not being considered as a substitute for board qualification by the American Board of Podiatric Surgery in Reconstructive Rearfoot Ankle Surgery in Sec. 34. Section 20-54(f).

The COS believes that any potential changes in the definition of the current podiatric scope of practice should be appropriately addressed through the legislative mechanism, adopted in 2011, Section 19a-16d, which directs the submission of scope of practice requests to the Department of Public Health.

Our understanding is that when podiatrists who are board qualified by the American Board of Podiatric Surgery advance to board certified status, they are no longer referred to as “board qualified”. Therefore, we would not wish to preclude Connecticut podiatrists who have demonstrated a higher level of training, including those issued a permit to independently engage in advanced ankle surgery procedures which requires board certification by the American Board of Podiatric Surgery in Reconstructive Rearfoot Ankle Surgery, from engaging in the medical and nonsurgical treatment of the ankle and the anatomical structures of the ankle.

We hope the members of the Public Health Committee will consider our recommendation. Thank you for your time and consideration.