



Written Testimony of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society

***House Bill 5130 AN ACT CONCERNING CLEARANCE OF STUDENT ATHLETES WITH
CONCUSSIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN TEAM ACTIVITIES
Public Health Committee – February 16, 2016***

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and distinguished Members of the Public Health Committee, on behalf of the more than 250 orthopaedic surgeons of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in opposition to ***House Bill 5130 ,AN ACT CONCERNING CLEARANCE OF STUDENT ATHLETES WITH CONCUSSIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN TEAM ACTIVITIES.***

Our Society’s collective opposition to this bill is not to diminish the role of physical therapists but rather to emphasize to this Committee and the public that the diagnosis and management of sports related concussions is a clinical diagnosis and as such, is not within the definition of physical therapy found in CT Chapter 376, Sec. 20-66.

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury which results in a temporary disruption of normal brain function and it is imperative that health care professionals who are diagnosing, treating and managing and determining “return to play” of the patient have the experience, education and training to provide that care to the patient. Some of the care may include MRIs, CT Scans, EMGs or possible prescriptions, all of which are outside of the physical therapist’s scope of practice, training and experience.

Concussion care needs to be managed from the initial blow with the diagnosis, followed by stages of concussion recovery leading to the final phase of “clearance to return to play”. This spectrum of concussion care, which clearance to return to play is in fact the final phase of treatment, should only be within the scope of practice of those who are educated, trained and licensed to have the treatment authority. Return to practice decision cannot be considered outside of the treatment paradigm

Physical therapists are not licensed to establish a diagnosis. With team physicians and athletic trainers on the sidelines ready to care for those injured, there is no access to care issue that would warrant this Committee to grant the authority outside of a physical therapists scope of practice, to care for and clear concussed student athletes.

On behalf of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society, thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding this important bill and we respectfully ask that you oppose this bill in order to ensure the health and safety of Connecticut student athletes.

Respectfully Submitted by:

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