

Testimony in Support of Raised (H/SB 346): An Act Concerning Athletic Trainers
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Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter, and honorable members of the Public Health Committee.

I am writing today to testify in support of SB 346: An Act Concerning Athletic Trainers. I am an athletic trainer, a physical therapist and the current Department Head in the Department of Kinesiology at the University of Connecticut. Over my career I have practiced athletic training and physical therapy in clinical, collegiate and high school settings and been an academic program director for two entry-level athletic training education programs and the Doctor of Physical Therapy program at the University of Connecticut. I also volunteered as a youth soccer coach for 10 years and appreciate many of the challenges of providing opportunities for children to participate in healthy sport activities in the safest manner possible, with a largely volunteer, community-based workforce. I live in Mansfield Center.

SB 346 would update the current Athletic Trainer practice act to reflect current practice, and allow athletic trainers in Connecticut to practice to the full extent of their education and knowledge. I applaud our State leaders for advancing the welfare and safety of student-athletes participating in high schools sports through legislation (Public Act No. 14-66 An Act Concerning Youth Athletics and Concussions) and considering legislation that will extend these protections to as many young athletes as possible through HB5141: An Act Concerning Concussions and Youth Athletic Activities Conducted on Public Athletic Fields. The legislation however, does not assure ready access to health care professions trained to care for young athletes. Moreover, the existing legislation only addresses a small portion of the injuries and illnesses encountered by young athletes. I am truly alarmed at the number of college athletes who continue to suffer from unresolved problems related to injuries sustained in youth and high school sports. The proposed revisions to the Athletic Trainer practice act will afford greater access to healthcare professionals well-versed in sport related injuries and

illnesses. These athletic trainers will provide appropriate care and facilitate referral to other medical providers when advisable. The challenge of advancing the health and welfare of young athletes cannot be met by any single healthcare professional, it requires the effort of a village. Revision to the Athletic Trainer practice act expands that village.

Additionally, revision of the Athletic Trainer practice act would remove barriers to enhancing the health and welfare of those who serve and protect us. Athletic trainers have been imbedded into the healthcare team caring for our military personnel. Athletic trainers, working in a team with physicians, physical therapists, nurses and other professionals at Fort Benning GA and Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA)-Lackland are important examples of care that prevents injuries and illnesses, and assures timely intervention when incidents happen to minimize time loss and care costs. Programs such as these should be available to support our law enforcement and emergency service personnel. These physically active professionals that we all depend on deserve the best care and support we can provide. Expanding the care team through revision of the Athletic Training practice act removes another barrier in the quest for optimized support and care.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and considering my comment. Please feel free to contact me if I can assist in any manner.

Best regards,

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