



CONNECTICUT CHAPTER
of the American College of Surgeons
Professional Association, Inc.



Testimony in OPPOSITION to Senate Bill 306
An Act Concerning The Approval Of Podiatrists To Perform Standard Ankle Procedures
Public Health Committee
March 16, 2018

Senator Gerratana, Senator Somers, Representative Steinberg and members of the Public Health Committee, on behalf of the physicians and physicians in training of the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS) and the CT Chapter of the American College of Surgeons (CTACS), please accept this testimony in **opposition to Senate Bill 306 An Act Concerning The Approval Of Podiatrists To Perform Standard Ankle Procedures.**

Several years ago, the practice act for podiatrists was altered to allow certain podiatrists who are *board certified* in reconstructive rearfoot ankle surgery by the American Board of Podiatric Surgery to be granted a permit by the Department of Public Health (DPH) to engage in standard ankle surgeries. Subsequent legislation then expanded who can obtain such a permit by allowing any podiatrist board *qualified* yet not certified to be granted such a permit. Statutes also required the Commissioner of DPH to appoint an Advisory Committee of two podiatrists and two orthopedic surgeons to evaluate applicants. SB 306 **removes** from the process the involvement of highly trained orthopedic surgeons and turns all requirements for evaluation over solely to Connecticut Board of Podiatric Examiners. CSMS **strongly opposes** this legislation.

The determination of the scope of practice of any given healthcare profession is the responsibility of the legislature. Current statute ensures that skilled orthopedic surgeons have input in determining who can cut into the ankle of patients. This is critically necessary to create the balance that would be absent if health care professions become the sole determiners of their own scope. The General Assembly passed PA 11-209 establishing a process to review proposals to alter a profession's practice act for the specific purpose of creating a balanced and fair approach to vetting and altering the scope of practice. SB 306 represents the most potent expansion of scope that is possible by providing a mechanism that bypass PA 11-209 and limits the determination primarily to the group that is poised to benefit from the change with oversight only by the undefined mechanisms and uncertain resources of the Department of Public Health. While that will certainly expand the economic opportunities available to podiatrists it will not provide the checks and balances necessary to ensure that any changes of scope will also benefit the public who are the patients these health providers serve.

Please oppose SB 306.