

Written Testimony of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society

SB 306 AAC The Approval of Podiatrists to Perform Standard Ankle Surgery.

Public Health Committee – March 16, 2018

Senator Gerratana, Senator Somers, Representative Steinberg and distinguished Members of the Public Health Committee, on behalf of the more than 220 orthopaedic surgeons of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to **SB 306 AAC THE APPROVAL OF PODIATRISTS TO PERFORM STANDARD ANKLE SURGERY.**

My name is Dr. Lauren Geaney, I am an orthopaedic surgeon specializing in foot and ankle and an Assistant Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery at UConn Health Center's Musculoskeletal Institute. I serve on the Board of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society and as one of the Society's representative to the State's Department of Public Health's Podiatric Review Committee.

This proposed bill significantly weakens the objective foundation of the permit process currently in Statute which is the review of an application and cases by a podiatrist seeking advanced privileges to perform standard and advance ankle surgery independently defined by the statutory scope of practice. This four-member advisory committee, comprised of two podiatrists and two orthopaedic surgeons, is appointed by the Department of Public Health Commissioner to assist and advise the Commissioner in evaluating an applicant's training and experience. It is important to remember that this Committee does NOT decide whether the permit is granted, it is in place to carefully review the applicant to determine if they meet the statutory and regulatory requirements to perform advanced surgery and to share their findings with the Commissioner.

As a COS representative to this Advisory Committee, I, along with the other three members, review the qualifications and training of an applicant including cases that are submitted in support of their request to obtain a permit. Despite what you may have heard, this is a robust Committee that utilizes their education and experience to carefully review each application. Most often, all representatives (both orthopaedic surgeons and the podiatrists), agree with the overall decision to either recommend approval or denial when warranted; with the final determination and decision by the Commissioner.

This bill, if passed, would replace the current unbiased advisory committee with the Connecticut Board of Examiners in Podiatry consisting of two podiatrists and two members of the public. The Society contends that a layperson (public member of the committee) is not medically trained or educated to adequately review and evaluate an applicant's training and experience.

On behalf of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society, we ask you to maintain the current review system, carefully developed and arbitrated with the participation of the CT Podiatric Medical

Association and the CT Orthopaedic Society and passed by the CT legislature by opposing this bill that would change the body responsible for the comprehensive, educated and experienced permit application review of those podiatrists seeking to expand their scope to perform independent ankle and advanced ankle procedures.

Thank you for your time and consideration and I welcome any questions from this Committee.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Lauren Geaney, MD

COS Board Member

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