

Milford Podiatry Associates, P.C.
New Haven Foot Surgeons
Stratford Podiatry Associates, P.C.



Statement of Martin M. Pressman, DPM
Public Health Committee
Senate Bill 306
March 16, 2018

Sen. Gerratana, Sen. Somers, Rep. Steinberg and members of the committee:

My name is Dr. Martin Pressman. I am appearing before you today to speak in favor of Senate Bill 306, *An Act Concerning the Approval of Podiatrists to Perform Standard Ankle Surgical Procedures*.

I am a practicing Podiatric Surgeon in Connecticut, and also serve as the Chairman of the Connecticut Board of Examiners in Podiatry, State of Connecticut, and Section Chief of Podiatric Surgery, Department of Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation, Yale School of Medicine. I am a former President of the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery and currently serve as the chairman of the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery's computer-based patient simulation examination for both the foot and reconstructive rearfoot and ankle examinations. I am a member of the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery credentials committee which grants Board certification status to Podiatric Foot and Ankle surgeons throughout the country. I practice in Milford and New Haven, and I am a Clinical Assistant Professor of Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation, Yale School of Medicine. I have first-hand knowledge of training, licensure, and Board certification issues regarding podiatric surgeons.

A little background on this issue if I may. In 2007, the Podiatry statute was enhanced to allow those Podiatrists with the requisite training, skill, and competence to perform ankle surgery. This statute created an "advisory committee" of two Orthopedists and two Podiatrists to review the applications for ankle permits. This statute change should have allowed well-trained foot and ankle surgeons to stay in Connecticut after their training, as well as allowing others to come to Connecticut to practice and perform ankle procedures. The goal has been only partially met for the following reasons.

The process to gain an ankle surgical permit has been in place for eleven years. The committee membership has changed over the years due to problems of availability of members and due to interpersonal difficulties between members. During these periods of time there had been delays in case reviews and this has led to hardships for applicants. You have either heard about these hardships from previous testimony or you will hear about them in a few minutes. Podiatric Foot and ankle surgeons wanting to practice in Connecticut know this reputation for delays and are choosing to go elsewhere.

While the process may have improved over recent years, there is an issue which remains unresolved. That is one of due process for those applicants who may be denied a permit. I am unaware of any mechanism available to the committee to hear an appeal. Therefore, the responsibility for deciding ankle surgery permits should be vested in the Connecticut Board of Examiners in Podiatry, which is placed in the Department of Public Health for administrative purposes.

- The board can review credentials and count the cases to determine eligibility for Ankle permits. Minutes of these meetings are recorded and are published online. The board has quarterly regularly scheduled meetings at which cases would be adjudicated. The Board understands its duty to protect the public and has been pursuing that objective since its inception.
- Licensure and disciplinary issues have long been under the purview of the State Board of Podiatry examiners. Having committee members from a different profession making judgements on the experience, training and competence of a competing profession carries with it the appearance of a conflict of interest. The process is simply one of a counting of cases in various categories. Something the Board is very well qualified to do.
- With respect to cases of potential denials, the board may offer an appeal process such as a recount, or a hearing; whereby the applicant can submit additional information, testify under oath, and may have counsel.

For all these reason, I urge you to support Senate Bill 306.

Respectfully Submitted,
Martin M Pressman DPM
Chairman, Connecticut Board of Podiatry Examiners