

Public Health Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5199

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE SHORTAGE OF

Title: ATHLETIC TRAINERS IN THE STATE.

Vote Date: 3/4/2024

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/26/2024

File No.: 5

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

The Public Health Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill establishes a 9-member task force to study the shortage of athletic trainers in the state. The shortage has affected the potential safety of athletes, particularly high school athletes, who would benefit from an increased presence of certified athletic trainers at sporting events. The task force must report the findings of the study to the Public Health Committee by January 1, 2025.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Nicole Klarides Ditria, State Representative-105th District, Connecticut General Assembly:

Athletic trainers are allied health professionals who play a key role in the development of athletes in the state. We need to study the root causes of the shortage and report back to the Public Health Committee with possible solutions to address this shortage.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS):

CSMS supports this bill, acknowledging athletic trainers play an important role in safeguarding the health and well-being of athletes across various levels of competition. The shortage of athletic trainers in our state poses a concern. This scarcity not only compromises the quality of healthcare available to athletes, but also increases the risk of potential injuries going undetected or improperly managed. The establishment of a task force

will bring together a multi-disciplinary group of professionals to study and suggest ways to alleviate this shortage.

Fred Balsamo, Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors, Inc:

Mr. Balsamo submits testimony in support of the formation of this taskforce and requests the appointment of an athletic director to the task force membership.

Lampert, Rachel, Professor of Medicine, Yale School of Medicine:

As a cardiologist, Dr. Lampert stresses the benefit of having athletic trainers as the on-the-spot healthcare providers to help protect our athletes from sudden cardiac death, as well as other potentially life-threatening conditions. They are highly skilled in the performance of CPR and the use of an automated external defibrillators AEDs, and the shortage of these professionals puts athletes at risk for sudden cardiac death.

Jordan Gruskay, MD., Orthopedic Sports Medicine Surgeon:

Athletic trainers are invaluable to the care provided by a doctor and a crucial link and part of the health care team in treating young athletes. The shortage of athletic trainers is a growing problem requiring immediate attention. High profile cases around the country have demonstrated the life-saving potential of these professionals. The study called for in this bill is important to (1) identify the means to promote the athletic training profession to high school students and college students studying pre-professional health programs, and (2) promote available positions to future and current athletic training professionals allowing them to stay in Connecticut and fulfill our needs.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Daniel Twin, Taxpayers United:

Mr. Twin believes this is a misuse of taxpayer dollars and questions whether unelected members of the task force should be making recommendations that could impact state spending.

Reported by: David Rackliffe

Date: March 5, 2024