

Representative Salinas, Chair
Representative Hayden, Vice Chair
Representative Nosse, Vice Chair
House Committee on Health Care

April 23, 2019

RE: Support for SB 742

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter in support of SB 742. I have served as an athletic trainer in an athletic setting, the industrial setting and as an educator of future ATs as a faculty member at Oregon State University.

As an athletic trainer at the collegiate level, I used the skills I obtained through an accredited educational program in athletic training to provide healthcare for athletes at Oregon State University as well as various other institutions around the country. The education that I obtained to become a Certified AT also prepared me to work collaboratively with other healthcare providers and to maintain a high level of care for my patients. I have also been able to use these skills in a different setting providing athletic training services to employees at a distribution company. Industrial employees are often required to perform a very high level of physical labor position and therefore these individuals suffered discomfort and injury as much, or even more in some circumstances, as the athletes that I worked with at the college level. My role in this setting provided employees access to programs designed to prevent injuries by doing pre-shift stretches and warm-ups, consults on concerns relating to their physical wellbeing. SB 742 does not change the scope of practice of athletic trainers. It clarifies that athletic trainers can provide care for the same conditions they currently do, regardless of whether it was the result of participating in organized sport. Further, nothing in this bill will change the requirement that ATs collaborate with a physician when the injury is beyond the AT's "scope of practice or expertise" or the when "the injury is not responding to treatment."

SB 742 changes the educational requirements to ensure that as the degree transition occurs, newly graduated ATs as well as currently practicing ATs are not adversely affected by wording in the statute. As in the past, it will still be a requirement that ATs have passed the national Board of Certification for the Athletic Trainer certification examination prior to practicing in the state. We are preparing future ATs to specialize in the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of injuries and sport-related illnesses, and prevent and treat chronic musculoskeletal injuries from sports, physical and occupational activity, and provide immediate care for acute injuries. As with every other health care profession, education and training should define the professional competencies of an athletic trainer.

In closing, regulation of professions is to ensure that unqualified individuals are not performing skills that could harm the public. The current practice act does this by only allowing nationally Board of Certification certified ATs to practice athletic training in Oregon. However, when regulation becomes too restrictive it can unintentionally prevent professionals from practicing to their full level of training. This is a time when there is a need for greater access to health care providers, it is essential we allow all providers to work to their full level of training.

Thank you for this opportunity to express my beliefs that passage of this bill would acknowledge the value of ATs and support the practitioners of athletic training in their care of the people of the state of Oregon.

Sincerely,



Emily Norcross MA, ATC