

May 12, 2020

The Honorable Scott Lipps
Ohio House of Representatives
77 S. High Street
13th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Lipps and members of the House Health Committee:

I am writing to express my support for HB 484 (Carfagna, Abrams) Athletic Training, which is currently pending before the House Health Committee. My name is Nilesh Shah, MD, and I am a physician and Medical Director for Sports Medicine at Summa Health in Akron, Ohio. I have worked with athletic trainers in their capacity to provide health care services for over 20 years.

As a part of the healthcare team, services provided by ATs include injury and illness prevention, wellness promotion and education, emergent care, examination and clinical diagnosis, therapeutic intervention, and rehabilitation of injuries and medical conditions. The bill before the Committee updates the athletic training scope of practice act, which has not had a comprehensive update since its original enactment nearly 30 years ago. Similar to other health care professions, athletic training has evolved over the years along with the changes in therapeutic interventions, the delivery of care models, training and education changes.

The changes in the bill will further strengthen the care coordination model with the physician serving at the center of the care and the athletic trainer working closely with the patient to deliver optimal health outcomes. The bill will formalize the relationship through a collaboration agreement. It will also recognize that athletic trainers as licensed health care providers, may be able to administer life-saving prescription drugs, such as an epi-pen. In addition, with the national education requirements of all graduating entry level athletic trainers to have a masters of athletic training from a CAATE program in 2022, the bill will ensure athletic trainers in Ohio will be able to practice at the top of their license.

Especially in the high school realm, the athletic trainer is the gate keeper of care. With the push for population health and being good stewards of our health care dollars, the athletic trainer is the first line of defense for many of our student athletes. Instead of many of these children accessing the emergency department the athletic trainer can facilitate either appropriate referral to an outpatient appointment with a sports specialist or even treat the athlete without any need for a visit with a medical provider. This will help save healthcare dollars to the system.

With the passage of HB 484 athletic trainers in Ohio will be able to practice at the top of their license to ensure we retain athletic trainers, and attract graduates to practice in Ohio. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation. I respectfully request your support of HB 484.

Sincerely,

Nilesh Shah, MD, FAAFP, CAQSM
Medical Director, Summa Health Sports Medicine
Fellowship Director, Summa Health Sports Medicine Fellowship