

June 2, 2020  
HB 484 Opponent Testimony  
House Health Committee

Chairman Lipps, Ranking Member Boyd and all members of the House Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to give opponent testimony on House Bill 484. My name is Christine Schulte PT, MBA. I am an Ohio practicing physical therapist and a Cleveland Clinic Rehabilitation and Sports Therapy Outpatient Director for the Western Region of Northeast Ohio and have been a physical therapist for 34 years in the state of Ohio. I work with more than 1,000 rehabilitation professionals within our organization where I have been employed for 30 years. I also currently serve as Vice President of The Ohio Physical Therapy Association and am board liaison to the APTA Federal Affairs Liaison and the OPTA State Affairs Committee.

I am writing today in opposition to the proposal that removes reference to athletic injury from the definition of athletic training, and removing the definition of athletic injury from the Revised Code. I have worked collaboratively with athletic trainers across my 34 year career and the scope of responsibilities of a physical therapist and athletic trainer is vastly different. The athletic trainers spend the majority of their time with the community athletes of high schools, colleges and professionals in our region. The proposed removal of “athletic injuries” concerns me when I chat with a trainer who describes their practice as “icebags and ankles.” How will they manage a patient who has an underlying neurologic condition who injures themselves? How will they manage an oncologic patient who has been weakened by the medical treatments of chemotherapy to return to function? Their current academic training with many hours spent on an athletic field or training room does not expose them to these complex medical individuals. This is a major contrast to a physical therapist who is clinically trained in healthcare practices of hospitals and ambulatory medical clinics. Thus, the AT scope of injuries that could be covered by the currently proposed definition for athletic trainers does not reflect the training and education that ATs currently receive. This is especially concerning with the removal of practice settings as proposed by HB 484.

I understand that ATs are moving to a Master’s Degree program, however the Academic transition has not happened yet. I believe the ATs have put the cart before the horse as the academic changes have not been implemented to currently support this wider scope of practice and feel this should be postponed until the academic changes are in place.

I am able to support the language allowing ATs to administer certain drugs in their on field coverage in alignment with the collaborative agreement with medical professionals. The on field trainers would benefit from the this new language to allow them to appropriately manage an acute on field injured athlete.

Thank you for your consideration of my opinion and perspective on HB 484.