



Ohio Athletic Trainers' Association (OATA)
Sub HB 49 (Ryan) Operating Budget
Senate Finance Committee
Opponent Testimony
Thursday, June 15, 2017

Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chairwoman Manning, Ranking Member Skindell and members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Ohio Athletic Trainers' Association (OATA). My name is Siobhan Fagan M.Ed., AT, ATC, CSCS; I am the Clinical Coordinator of the Athletic Training Program for Wright State University and am a licensed athletic trainer (AT). On behalf of our organization, I would like to share with you our concerns regarding the consolidation of the current OTPTAT Board in the pending version of HB 49.

As an organization the OATA supports the Administration's proposal to create a third party review of antitrust compliance to ensure board actions do not violate state or federal anti-trust laws, and to protect boards against any possible litigation. Accordingly, OATA supports the changes to the anti-trust provisions the House included in their version of the bill. However, the OATA opposes the Administration's proposal to create the Physical Health Services Board, which has been included in the Senate version of the budget. The proposal would collapse the existing OTPTAT Board and combine it with the Orthotics, Prosthetics and Pedorthics Board. This would take the current number of Board members from 27 to 9. The new board as proposed would include one public member and at least one member from these occupations: athletic trainer, physical therapist, occupational therapist, orthotist, pedorthist, and prosthetist. Two additional members would also be appointed from these occupations: athletic trainer, physical therapist, or occupational therapist.

As you are aware, the OTPTAT Board provides oversight of the three professions representing approximately 30,000 licensees, with each Section addressing specific issues within their profession. Currently, the AT Section is responsible for licensed athletic trainers in the state of Ohio. The AT Section of the Board is comprised of four athletic trainers and one physician. ATs serve in many different settings, and the needs and issues of our professionals are highly diversified to these varied settings. This diversity is reflected in our board and if we were to lose this input, our licensees and public would not be appropriately served. We have stated previously, that the new structure of the board would impact consumer safety by allowing individuals who are not trained in athletic training to make decisions that could impact the education, oversight and discipline of the profession. In addition, the disproportionate manner in which the board would be made up could significantly politicize and fracture the congenial atmosphere of the board as it sits now. Finally, the efficiency and amount of the work that is done by our current board would be compromised and could create a backlog in these procedures and the enforcement of our laws and rules.



We believe the consolidation plan does not accomplish the stated goals of the proposal as follows:

- 1) **NO SAVINGS TO TAXPAYERS.** It does not achieve the efficiencies or cost-savings to tax payers, since the Boards are funded by the fees generated by its licensees;
- 2) **DOES NOT REPRESENT CLINICAL PRACTICE.** The proposal does not represent clinical practices and standards as noted by the Administration. For example, the athletic trainer is educated and trained under a philosophy that is more encompassing than physical rehabilitation; it is more comprehensive in scope with a focus on injury prevention and wellness;
- 3) **DOES NOT REFLECT SUPPORT OF CARE COORDINATION.** The AT Section currently has a physician serving on the board. The exclusion of a physician under the current proposal is counter to the care coordination goal that has been the hallmark of the Administration's overall health care policy;
- 4) **DISPROPORTIONATE REPRESENTATION.** The potential of one profession to have more representation on the Board than another, would put one profession at an advantage over another, and could have the potential to politicize the appointment process;
- 5) **PUBLIC SAFETY CONCERNS.** Based on the current volume of work for each of our Section Board members, there is concern that a reduction in the number of board members would jeopardize public safety.

However, we do recognize an interest in board consolidation in some form, and welcome the inclusion of the additional providers as part of the existing OTPTAT Board as either their own Section or as an advisory council. We would welcome the opportunity to work with the Senate to help address its policy goals, and permit the existing success of the OTPTAT Board to continue.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our concerns, and I am available to answer any questions you may have at this time.