



**Ohio Senate Judiciary Committee
Proponent Testimony
Am. Sub HB 606
Wednesday, June 24, 2020**

Chairman Eklund, members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I am Ryan Weible and I am a licensed athletic trainer, and I am serve as the Treasurer of the Ohio Athletic Trainers' Association (OATA). I am here today to testify on behalf of the Ohio Athletic Trainers' Association as a proponent of Am Sub HB 606 (Grendell) Civil Immunity.

For those of you who may not be familiar with athletic trainers, we are licensed health care providers in the state of Ohio. There are currently over 2,000 licensed ATs in Ohio. The AT Section of the OTPTAT Board is responsible for the regulatory oversight of licensed ATs. Athletic trainers work in a variety of settings, including primary and secondary school settings, university and college athletic programs, professional sports programs, youth and community parks and recreation programs, hospitals, sports medicine clinics, wellness clinics, occupational and industrial settings. As health care providers focused on the prevention and rehabilitation of injuries, athletic trainers are educated and trained on first aid and emergency response. Often times, the athletic trainer in a school setting will work as part of the team to put together the emergency response plan for the school.

During the current pandemic, athletic trainers have been utilized to assist in various ways across the state, including screening patients for COVID19 testing, helping with the response to the initial COVID19 surge planning. As such, OATA supports HB 606 that allows for reasonable protections for health care professionals during a disaster or state of emergency, providing services in response to or as a result of the disaster or state of emergency.

Furthermore, as recreational and sporting activities resume, it will be important to have the bill's protection in place for athletic trainers to continue to ensure the safety of the patient. Through the development of disinfecting and social distancing policies, management of patient screening and testing protocols, as well as recommending additional pre-preparation screening measures for those who have tested positive or been exposed to COVID19, the work of athletic trainers will continue beyond the doors of the physician's office or hospital. The care and concern for the safety of the patient is always first and foremost in our profession, and we will all be working to prevent the spread of the virus, however, due to the asymptomatic cases and the constant changing information about a novel coronavirus, knowing civil immunity is in place provides a peace of mind during a very uncertain time.

Health care professionals are here to respond and help in an emergency, these protections afford us the ability to continue to do our jobs when we are called upon and needed under circumstances that are extraordinary.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony today. I am happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.