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Sponsor Testimony

Senate Bill 320

Ohio Senate Health Committee

February 10, 2026

Chair Huffman, Vice-Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Liston, and Members of the Senate Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on S.B. 320, which upon enactment would join Ohio to the “Athletic Trainer Compact.”

This bill recognizes the modern reality of health care delivery. Athletic trainers increasingly practice across state lines, whether supporting traveling teams, working with collegiate or professional athletics, serving patients through telehealth, or relocating due to family or military obligations. Under the current system, licensed athletic trainers must obtain and maintain separate licenses in every state where they practice, even when those states impose substantially similar education, examination, and professional standards.¹ This compact provides a streamlined, secure mechanism for interstate practice while maintaining each state’s full authority over licensure, discipline, and scope of practice.

The Athletic Trainer Compact does not create a national license, nor does it weaken Ohio’s regulatory authority. Instead, it allows an athletic trainer who holds an unencumbered license in a member state and meets uniform eligibility requirements to obtain a “compact privilege” to practice in other member states. Ohio retains complete authority to regulate athletic trainers practicing within its borders, enforce Ohio’s scope-of-practice laws, investigate complaints, and take disciplinary action when necessary. In fact, the compact strengthens public protection by improving real-time information sharing among states regarding licensure status, disciplinary actions, and significant investigative findings.

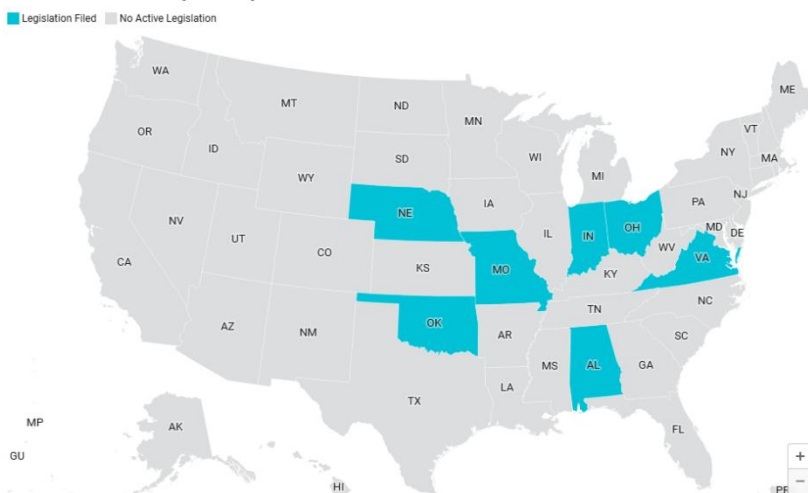
¹ <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-4755.62>

This legislation establishes clear eligibility standards to ensure that only qualified professionals may participate. To exercise compact privileges, an athletic trainer must hold a qualifying license, meet education and examination requirements tied to nationally recognized accreditation and certification standards, complete a criminal background check, maintain continuing competence, and have no recent license encumbrances. These safeguards ensure that mobility is extended only to practitioners who are in good standing and meet high professional standards.

Public safety is further reinforced through robust enforcement mechanisms. If an athletic trainer violates Ohio law while practicing in this state, Ohio may take immediate action against that individual's compact privilege, including suspension or removal, just as it would with a traditional license. Any disciplinary action taken by a member state is communicated through the compact's shared data system, ensuring that problematic conduct cannot be hidden by crossing state lines. Rather than diminishing accountability, the compact enhances it by closing regulatory blind spots that currently exist between states.

The bill also provides important workforce benefits. By reducing duplicative licensure requirements, the compact supports workforce development and helps address shortages in athletic training services, particularly in rural or underserved areas. It also offers meaningful support to active military members and their spouses, who are often required to relocate across state lines and face unnecessary professional barriers as a result. Under the compact, these individuals can continue practicing without repeated delays, fees, and administrative hurdles, while still remaining subject to Ohio's laws and oversight.

Athletic Trainer Compact Map



The first seven states to pass legislation for a particular compact form a compact commission with authority over rulemaking and performance, as well as permanent representation within the compact. Member states retain control over fees and licensure decisions, and the

compact includes clear auditing, reporting, and transparency requirements. Currently, six other states have Athletic Trainer Compact legislation filed: Nebraska, Missouri, Oklahoma, Indiana, Alabama, and Virginia. Importantly, Ohio is not required to join unless and until the compact becomes effective nationwide, and the state may withdraw in the future through legislative action if participation no longer serves Ohio's interests.

In conclusion, this bill modernizes athletic trainer licensure in a way that reflects today's health care environment while preserving Ohio's regulatory authority and commitment to public safety. It expands access to care, supports a mobile and highly trained workforce, enhances interstate cooperation, and strengthens oversight through shared data and enforcement.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.