



OHIO PODIATRIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, DBA  
**OHIO FOOT AND ANKLE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**  
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Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 131  
Health & Aging Committee  
The Ohio House of Representatives  
June 21, 2017

Chairman Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio, members of the committee, my name is Jimelle Rumberg, Ph.D., CAE, and I serve as the Executive Director of the Ohio Foot & Ankle Medical Association (OHFAMA). On behalf of the members that I serve, I would like to convey our association's sincere concerns and opposition to House Bill 131, legislation that constitutes an enormous scope of practice enhancement for physical therapists in Ohio.

As the members of this committee may be aware, HB 131 is a reintroduction of House Bill 169 from the last session of the Ohio General Assembly. During the debate on HB 169 from last session (which was in the House Commerce & Labor Committee) OHFAMA joined with other physician groups such as the Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA), the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Ohio Osteopathic Association and the Academy of Medicine of Cleveland in conveying our united opposition to that legislation. OHFAMA remains strongly opposed to HB 131 this session and while I cannot speak directly for those other physician organizations, I strongly believe they will also convey their adamant opposition to this bill before this committee.

Ohio's podiatric physicians currently work very well with physical therapists as part of a "team approach" in helping patients and are trying to discover why the current system, that appears to be working very well for those very patients, needs to be changed. The medical practice privileges language in the bill that may be extended to physical therapists to "determine diagnoses in order to treat" are disturbing and have long been a patient safety and care issue surrounding the desire by physical therapists to expand their practice in Ohio. It is our association's belief that the diagnosis of medical conditions should be performed by appropriately trained licensed physicians or those allied health professionals who are acting under the authority of a physician. While OHFAMA and the physician community believe physical therapists provide service to patients and are an ally in the team approach in caring for patients, physical therapists are indeed therapists with a therapist acumen; not physicians with three year residencies with analytic applications.

OHFAMA member physicians feel that it is not prudent for physical therapists to be able to "order tests that are performed and interpreted by other health care professionals." Past assertions have been made by representatives of the PT Association that this legislation may save the health system money. We are not aware of any existing independent data

that exists that would prove that statement to be truly accurate. If physical therapists were allowed to order MRIs and other tests, it would likely result in increased costs to the system. Our continuing belief is that diagnostic laboratory and imaging studies should be ordered by those with the appropriate education and training to follow-up on those results.

Furthermore, Medicare does not recognize diagnosis and treatment of conditions within the scope of care for physical therapists. Ohio should not legislate to transgress CMS's protocols and allow the PT scope of practice to include this type of treatment and care.

Doctors of Podiatric Medicine (DPMs) are physicians that treat the foot and ankle and those supporting structures via medical and surgical care. Our organization was founded in 1915. The Kent State University College of Podiatric Medicine, with 400 podiatric medical students, is the oldest and largest podiatric medical college in the United States. It should be also noted that Ohio has 17 three-year residency programs in hospitals to train podiatric physicians in today's standards of care and scope. Even with their efforts to upgrade certain educational aspects of physical therapy, podiatric physicians and Ohio's other physicians just do not believe that the ability to render a differential diagnosis in order to treat patients is in the best interest of the patient. While PT's are a valued member of an all-around team to care for patients, they are not trained and educated to be primary care providers.

On behalf of the podiatric physicians and surgeons that make up OHFAMA, we respectfully remain opposed to the enormous scope of practice enhancement for physical therapists that is contained in House Bill 131. As with any health care issue that is of interest before the Ohio General Assembly that might be of impact to Ohio's podiatric physicians and surgeons and the patients we serve, please feel free to contact me if I can answer any questions regarding House Bill 131.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony to the committee regarding this important legislation.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jimelle Rumberg, Ph.D." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jimelle Rumberg, Ph.D.  
Executive Director  
Ohio Foot and Ankle Medical Association