

Date: 02/10/2026

To: Chair Bagnall, and Vice Chair Cullison of the House Health Committee

Reference: HB0445- Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance - Coverage for Orthoses and Prostheses (So Every Body Can Move Act)

Position: **Support/Favorable**

Dear Chair Bagnall, and Committee Members:

We are grateful for the opportunity to share our comments on House Bill 445 and to encourage your support for this legislation. We are a group of healthcare providers who work closely with orthotic patients, including physicians, physical therapists, physician assistants, occupational therapists, and adaptive sports practitioners. As medical professionals, we are acutely aware of the challenges our patients face. Without the right device, we are unable to help patients progress beyond a certain point in their rehabilitation journey. No amount of appointments, prescriptions, or physical or occupational therapy alone can enable a patient to participate in sports and exercise if their orthosis is not appropriate to support that activity. All of our services are complementary to the provision of an appropriate, medically necessary orthotic device. Below is a collection of testimony from a variety of medical professionals who respectfully ask for your support of HB 445:

- Expand current So Every BODY Can Move legislation in Maryland to include coverage for activity-specific orthotic devices for individuals with fully insured state commercial plans, state employee plans, and Medicaid beneficiaries. Our law already covers activity-specific prostheses for individuals with the insurance plans listed above.
- These patients have so many hobbies and interests outside of simply walking - overall wellness would be improved for this population if afforded the ability to continue engagement in these activities.
- As a facilitator of the adaptive yoga program, Y4A Yoga for Amputees and Co-Director, I've witnessed firsthand the importance of having access to prosthetic and orthotic devices for amputees doing yoga. Without their prostheses, specifically, amputees who have lower limb loss would not be able to participate to the extent that they are. By having a prosthetic device enabling them to do yoga seated, standing and while moving, they are supporting their overall health and well-being in a powerful way. Additionally, I've witnessed amputees using their prosthetic devices to participate in adaptive CrossFit programs, and participating in other forms of exercise like walking and running. These individuals are passionate about their level of fitness, their physical and mental health, and take the steps necessary to get involved in such wellness programs. The importance of these prosthetic and orthotic devices for amputees to be able to participate in exercise and fitness programs CANNOT be underestimated. Access to prosthetic devices for participating in

activities is essential for people with limb loss or limb difference, as it supports their health, independence, autonomy, and full participation in daily life.

- Every person deserves to live a full life. We don't ask able bodied people to only move themselves from point A to point B, so why would we limit people with disabilities. Wheelchairs and orthotics should be as dynamic as the individuals who need them, allowing the to engage in a meaningful way within the communities. We have the technology to promote that, but it means nothing without the coverage to make it accessible to all.
- Our patients need to engage in other activities to improve their cardiovascular health as well as engage in social and community activities. This is necessary to reduce other medical issues such as heart disease, cognitive decline, and depression.
- Everyone deserves to move and be active and participate in the activities they loved before an injury. It is short sighted to tell people that the bare minimum is fine after an injury when there are resources to help them get back to the things they love.
- Being able to move with more ease will foster them continuing to explore the health benefits of yoga movement, meditation, and breath work. Movement is fundamental to physical, mental, and emotional health.

When our patients do not have access to appropriate custom orthoses that allow them to engage in sports, recreation, and activities beyond walking, our therapies and interventions are limited in their effectiveness. Successful patient outcomes require the full coordination of appropriate clinical services and medically necessary devices. Our patients need this legislation to reach their full potential. For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to support HB 445.

Thank you for your consideration and your support,

Representatives from:

The Johns Hopkins Hospital
Kennedy Krieger Institute
MedStar Health
MedStar NRH Good Samaritan Hospital
Medstar Olney
Rehabilitation Institute of Sinai
Serenity Bay Yoga, LLC
Y4A Yoga for Amputees
Anna S Page, PT, DPT, OCS
Bryan Caplan, PT, DPT, MTC
Catherine Szyjka, PT, DPT #22602

David Federline, OT/L
Heather Thamer, M.ED, E-RYT 500
Jennifer McDivitt, PT
Judith A. Bopp, PT #16652
Madeline lager, PTA
Margaret L. Lomax, C-IAYT, E-RYT 500
Mariam Keramati, DO
Meredith Drake, PT
Reanna Beatty, OTR/L, ATC
Valerie Jones, PT, DPT