

Justin Cashman, MD  
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130 Admiral Cochrane Drive, #303  
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RE: Podiatry Bill HB 428

Position: Unfavorable (UNF)

To the Delegates considering House Bill 428,

States laws are in place to protect Maryland residents. In this case, HB 428 codifies deceptive advertising. As a fellowship trained Orthopedic Surgeon who has completed two fellowships in Orthopedic foot and ankle surgery, I have nothing against the field of Podiatry. There are some very good podiatrists; however, podiatrists are not physicians and should not be named as such by the State Legislature.

In my community of Annapolis Maryland, there are podiatrists who regularly make statements such as “during my time in medical school”. Billboards along major thoroughfares read “Board Certified Surgeons” outside of podiatry practices. These statements are not true, and the legislature needs to protect patients from this deception. Podiatrists do not attend medical school, complete a five-year orthopedic residency, and do post residency fellowship training. The Board which certifies podiatrists is the podiatry board, not the National Board of Medical Examiners or the American Board of Orthopedic Surgery. Years of study are not completed by podiatrists to pass all three parts of the National Board of Medical Examiners. They are not Board-Certified Orthopedic Surgeons, a designation which requires extensive training as well as continued study to recertify every ten years.

Again, I have friends and colleagues in the field of podiatry. This bill does nothing to change my opinion or respect for their work; however, the bill does not do a service to the uninformed public who in their time of need may, due to this new legal designation created by HB 428, choose to see a “physician” for a problem that requires the services of a Medical Doctor.

I ask that legislators vote “NO” on this bill in the interest of patient protection. Maryland should not allow a “caveat emptor” policy to govern over its residents’ medical care. There is no reason, other than to deceive an unknowing public, as to why this bill has merit. Podiatrists serve a much-needed role in the treatment of the citizens of Maryland. While they do treat patients, they are not physicians in the manner with which the public associates that title. Please do codify deceptive advertising into Maryland law.

Sincerely,

Justin Cashman, MD