

January 21, 2021

**Bill: SB 169- Health Occupations- Podiatric Physicians**

**Position: SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Pinsky, Vice-Chair Kagan, and Members of the EHEA Committee:

My name is Dr. Vincent Martorana and I have been licensed to practice podiatric medicine and surgery in Maryland since 1978.

I'd like to share with you that as a medical professional we serve side by side with our MD and DO physician colleagues. Not only at bedside providing patient care but also serving on hospital committees. In fact, it was an orthopedic surgeon that initially nominated me to the Medical Executive Committee (MEC) as well as recommending Podiatric Surgery be a section independent of Orthopedic or General Surgery.

Frankly, I have never felt that I was considered anything other than a podiatric physician. I was recently amused when I came across a copy of my commencement address to my classmates some 43 years ago in which I used precisely the same term, podiatric physician. "Physician" is a term that 36 States currently use to describe Doctors of Podiatric Medicine.

We serve with our MD/DO colleagues in the roles of:

- Members of hospital Medical Executive Committees (MEC)
- Section Chiefs of Podiatric Surgery
- Presidents of the medical staff, a position elected to by *physician* colleagues
- *Physician* members of virtually every hospital committee including those that oversee peer review, disciplinary actions and privileging of all physicians and allied health care providers.
- *Physician* members on hospital Board of Directors
- *Physician* Chair of the Board of Directors at a local teaching hospital
- *Physician* member on the Board of MedStar Health,
- *Physician* member on the Quality, Safety and Professional Affairs Committee for the MedStar Health Corporate Board

It is difficult for me to understand the reason for push back by the Orthopedic Foot and Ankle sub-group. They have the confidence in us to refer some of their most "at risk" patients with complex life and limb threatening infections, and yet are opposed to the title change of podiatrist to podiatric physician! They have previously testified that it would be confusing to the public. Now, if we were requesting to be referred to as physicians, I can understand that. But quite clearly our request is for our designation to be *podiatric physicians*.

Kindly take note of the letters of support provided by our physician colleagues and hospital administrators. The objection by the Maryland Orthopedic Foot and Ankle sub-group appears to be nothing more than a turf-related issue. I respectfully request this committee vote favorably on this bill to change the designation of podiatrist to podiatric physician so as to more accurately reflect to the public our education, training and experience.

Thank you,

Dr. Vincent Martorana