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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401
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SB 711

Health Occupations – Licensed Athletic Trainers – Dry Needling Registration

Good Afternoon Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan and Members of the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee,

I am happy to introduce SB 711-Health Occupations - Licensed Athletic Trainers - Dry Needling Registration.

This is a very important bill for our state athletic trainers(AT's), athletes, and to the educational institutions in the State. AT's from the Baltimore Ravens, Baltimore Orioles, University of Maryland, United States Naval Academy, and Towson University all support this bill.

Our universities and professional sports teams are recruiting athletic trainers from other states who are certified to dry needle, but once these professionals move to the state, they are unable to practice this modality. This is because the Board of Physicians has said dry needling is not within the current scope of an Athletic Trainer.

My panel will go into further detail, but dryneedling(DN) is a skilled intervention that uses a thin filiform needle to penetrate the skin and stimulate underlying myofascial triggerpoints, muscular, and connective tissues for the management of neuromusculoskeletal pain and movement impairments. It is used to treat parts of the muscle and deeper layers of muscles which hands and fingers cannot reach, and it works faster than massage at relaxing the muscles. This bill establishes a licensing process for athletic trainers to perform dry needling under the almost identical standards as Physical Therapists.

We have met with representatives from the MD Chiropractic Association, Maryland Physical Therapist Association, and MedChi. These groups understand that this bill requires the Athletic Trainer's to meet or exceed the same requirements as other providers. They did not have any immediate concerns or suggested amendments.

Dry needling is performed, where allowed by state law, by a number of providers including Athletic Trainers, physicians, nurses, physical therapists, chiropractors, and acupuncturists. In fact, Athletic Trainers can already dry needle in 26 other states and the District of Columbia.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable vote on SB 711.