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Position: Support

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in Support of **SB 232/HB 172- LICENSED ATHLETIC TRAINERS- DRY NEEDLING APPROVAL.**

I want to take the time to thank the committee for this opportunity to present on this important issue for the healthcare of patients in this state. My name is Adrian Dixon, and I am the Head athletic trainer for the Baltimore Ravens football club. I'm here today in support of passage of (Senate Bill 0232/House Bill 0172). I believe as healthcare professionals we have a duty to serve our patients in a manner that seeks to provide the best care possible. In speaking about the patient population that I serve which is professional athletes, I strongly believe as an athletic trainer, I should have the ability to provide this method of treatment for our athletes. I happen to be a physical therapist as well and legally; this is the only way I am able to provide the treatment currently.

In the previous state I practiced in which was Tennessee, Dry Needling was also not within the scope of practice for athletic trainers. This put an undue burden on me personally as I was the only dual credentialed professional on staff which is what an athletic trainer would have to be to administer this treatment. Imagine being the only practitioner with the responsibility to provide this service to 60 plus individuals on any given time throughout the week. It can become extremely demanding and inefficient. Teams seek to hire athletic trainers as it is demonstratively clear we are most suited and equipped to work in the athletic setting. If you need proof of this, we all witnessed the Buffalo Bills player a few weeks ago.

The difficulty presents when athletic trainers are precluded from providing this treatment method, limiting our ability to give the best care to our athletes mainly due to an antiquated thought process manifesting itself in the current scope of practice. I have also worked in the state of Texas where athletic trainers have the ability to provide dry needling to their athletes and it truly bothers the competitive drive in me to know that the Dallas Cowboys and Houston Texans can be more efficient and effective in their treatments with their athletes, which in theory could give them a competitive advantage over us.

I support the passage of this bill 100% because I believe athletic trainers in the state of Maryland are well suited to be able to provide this treatment safely and effectively. If there is doubt, I would point to the 28 other states and DC who already allow athletic trainers to Dry needle. Additionally, I have 8 years of Dry Needling experience with no adverse effects. It's time to advance the scope practice for athletic trainers in this state. This is more than appropriate because as any medical professional would attest, as the research and knowledge evolve, your practice should evolve. In my opinion this evolution of practice is long overdue.

In closing, I want to personally ask you to help me and the Baltimore Ravens sport medicine staff be able to deliver the most evidenced based and effective treatments to our athletes. You can do this by voting for (Senate Bill 0232/House Bill 0172). I respectfully request a favorable vote on both HB 172 and SB 232. Thank-you for your time.

Sincerely,

Adrian Dixon, PT, DPT, MS, ATC, CSCS
Head Athletic Trainer-Baltimore Ravens