

January 17, 2021

Senator Jen Day
Room 1018
PO Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509
Email: jday@leg.ne.gov

Dear Senator Day:

As an athletic trainer, the chair of the Nebraska State Athletic Trainers' Association Governmental Affairs Committee, and a constituent, I am writing to request your support of LB 436. LB 436 is a bill intended to update the Athletic Training Practice Act. Athletic Trainers are nationally certified and state licensed health care professionals in Nebraska who render service or treatment, under guidelines established with a licensed physician, in accordance with their education and training and in compliance with state statutes, rules and regulations.

The Athletic Training Practice Act was last updated in 1999. Since that time there have been three updates to the educational competencies which guide our professional preparation. The skills, education and populations served have continued to evolve and the current practice act limits the ability of the athletic trainers in Nebraska to practice to the highest level of our professional preparation. The current language further limits access to quality health care by individuals based on a single term- athlete. Members of the public who do not meet the definition of athlete are not allowed to access the services of athletic trainers and providers may not refer these patients to athletic trainers, regardless of their injury or condition. Athletes and non-athletes can be afflicted by the same illnesses, injuries, and conditions. The patient and referring provider should be afforded the opportunity to choose who they feel is best suited to treat their condition.

Public safety is of the utmost concern for the changes that are being proposed. This update is not intended to provide the opportunity for athletic trainers to render services which fall outside of our education and training. The proposed changes to the practice act clearly provide for public safety by ensuring that:

- Services are provided under guidelines established with a physician or upon referral from a defined list of providers for athletic training services;
- Athletic Trainer only provide those services which they have been educated or trained to provide;
- Athletic Trainers are subject to the same oversight and disciplinary process as all licensed and credentialed health care professions within the state via the Uniform Credentialing Act;
- Athletic Trainers are responsible to act in a professional manner in ensuring that the three previous standards are met.

There are currently 417 Athletic Trainers in the state of Nebraska, of which 18 reside in District 49. These athletic trainers provide services to high schools, professional and recreational sports teams, out-patient clinics and at youth sporting events. I personally provide services to patients in each of these settings through my employment at Nebraska Medicine.

I appreciate your services to those who live in District 49 and across Nebraska. Thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or would like to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely:

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