

Testimony of the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA)
U.S. House Energy and Commerce Committee
Hearing on Examining Legislation to Improve Health Care and Treatment

Submitted on December 9, 2015 by NATA President, Scott Sailor, EdD, ATC

On behalf of the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA), I am pleased to have the opportunity to provide written testimony to the House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee hearing titled "Examining Legislation to Improve Health Care and Treatment." Specifically, NATA is supportive of the *Sports Medicine Licensure Clarity Act of 2015* (H.R. 921).

As you may know, NATA is a professional organization serving more than 43,000 certified athletic trainers, students of athletic training, and other health care professionals. Our mission is to represent, engage, and foster the continued growth and development of the athletic training profession and athletic trainers as unique health care providers. Athletic trainers are health care professionals who collaborate with physicians to provide preventative services, emergency care, clinical diagnosis, therapeutic intervention, and rehabilitation of injuries. As the leading organization representing athletic trainers, NATA is in full support of the *Sports Medicine Licensure Clarity Act of 2015*.

Athletic trainers and other sports medicine professionals care for individual athletes and entire athletic teams at the professional and collegiate levels. However, in many states no legal protection is provided for athletic trainers or sports medicine professionals whose job requires travel outside of their home state (where they are licensed) with an athletic team for the purpose of providing health care coverage for their team. Medical liability insurance carriers do not cover such health care

professionals when they travel with their team to states where they are not licensed to practice. Consequently, they must choose between either treating injured athletes at great professional risk or abandoning the athletes to whom they provide care.

The *Sports Medicine Licensure Clarity Act of 2015* will provide legal protection for athletic trainers and sports medicine professionals who must travel to other states with an athletic team to provide care for the members of that team. For the purposes of liability, health care services provided by a covered athletic trainer or sports medicine professional to an athlete, an athletic team, or a staff member of the team outside of his or her home state will be deemed to have occurred in the professional's primary state of licensure. The legislation also allows athletic trainers and other sports medicine professionals to engage in the treatment of injured athletes across state lines without the fear of great professional harm, such as loss of license to practice, while protected from financial loss with professional liability insurance. The legislation aims to preserve athletes and athletic teams' access to high-quality health care services provided by athletic trainers and other sports medicine professionals.

Thank you for this opportunity to present our views. We look forward to working with you to address these and other important issues. Should you have any questions or require any additional resources, please feel free to contact NATA.

Scott Sailor, EdD, ATC
NATA President