



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
MASSACHUSETTS SENATE

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Chair
JOINT COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE FINANCING

Chair
SENATE COMMITTEE ON STEERING AND POLICY

September 29, 2025

Senator William J. Driscoll, Jr.
Chair, Joint Committee on Public Health
24 Beacon St. Room 507
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Marjorie C. Decker
Chair, Joint Committee on Public Health
24 Beacon St. Room 130
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chair Driscoll and Chair Decker,

I write in support of a bill I filed that is before your committee, S.1542, *An Act relative to the definition of podiatry*.

Podiatrists are trained in medically and surgically treating both the foot and ankle. However, many podiatrists in Massachusetts can only treat the foot, and not the ankle. This is because many work for or would need to treat the ankle in a facility such as a hospital or surgical center. These facilities can prohibit podiatrists from treating the ankle because Massachusetts' statute outlining podiatrists' scope of practice does not **explicitly** state that podiatrists can do so.¹ Even though the Commonwealth's regulations permit podiatrists to treat the ankle,² from a liability perspective, facilities may believe that they are limiting their risk by only allowing podiatrists to treat feet.

Podiatrists are fully capable of treating the ankle and should be able to do so. Forty-eight (48) other states explicitly say in their statutes that podiatrists can treat the ankle. Massachusetts and Mississippi are the only outliers.

Being one of the two outlier states regarding this policy has significant drawbacks, and joining the majority would have major benefits. Podiatrists are trained extensively on the ankle in podiatry

¹ See [M.G.L. 112 § 13](#).

² See [249 C.M.R. 2.02](#), "Practice of Podiatry".

school and in residency, but with many unable to practice on the ankle once they leave residency, some leave the state. Therefore, allowing podiatrists to treat the ankle would encourage more podiatrists to remain in Massachusetts. Additionally, according to the Federal Trade Commission, allowing podiatrists to treat the ankle would make care in the Commonwealth more accessible and affordable by increasing the number of practitioners who are able to provide this service.³

S.1542 would simply codify the definition of podiatry in state statute, leaving no room for interpretation as to the scope of practice for podiatrists – a small action that will have a big impact. For the reasons stated above, I respectfully request the committee report S.1542 favorably. Thank you for your consideration and please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cynthia F. Friedman", followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Cindy F. Friedman

³ See FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION, Letter Re. House Bill 1869/Senate Bill 1329, 1, https://www.ftc.gov/system/files/documents/advocacy_documents/comment-staff-federal-trade-commission-massachusetts-rep-paul-j-donato-regarding-hb1869-sb1329/v200002_staff_comment_letter_re_ma_house_1869_senate_1329_signed.pdf.