

Steven Sepe

From: Victoria Lellis <lellisdpm@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 2:24 PM
To: House Health and Human Services Committee
Subject: Concerns Regarding Podiatry Bill Modification H6088

Dear Ms. Donovan,

I am reaching out regarding the proposed legislation and Podiatry bill modification H6088 currently under consideration in the Rhode Island legislature.

I have significant concerns about this bill, particularly its impact on public health and the safety of Rhode Islanders. I am especially worried about the credentialing process for the so-called "foot care nurses" mentioned in the bill.

As a fully licensed podiatrist, I underwent 4 years of undergraduate studies, 4 years of podiatric medical school, and 3 years of surgical residency, in addition to multiple board examinations to ensure my knowledge of the foot and ankle was thorough. I can't imagine the same can be said for the foot care nurses who were "credentialled". Their training can not even begin to compete with the breadth of mine.

I can't begin to count the number of times I had to take over the care of a person under the care of home nursing or assisted living nursing to find poor foot conditions such as vascular insufficiency and wounds that appeared superficial to the untrained eye but actually were hiding bone infection that had been left untreated for weeks which resulted in amputations of the forefoot, if not even below the knee because it couldn't be salvaged. The poor care given to those at risk patients resulted in even worse quality of life, and higher health care costs to the system overall due to prolonged hospital stays, which could have been avoided by the evaluation of a podiatrist.

These foot care nurses seem to be a short term solution but I assure you it will end up with long lasting consequences of increased health care costs and increased mortality and morbidity of Rhode Island residents.

If passed, this legislation could have lasting consequences for patient safety and overall healthcare standards in our state.

I sincerely hope that the Rhode Island Department of Health will oppose this bill. I would be happy to discuss my concerns further if needed—please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Best regards,

Victoria Lellis, DPM