

Testimony in Favor of Bill S2116

To: THE SENATE COMMITTEE SLegislation@rilegislature.gov

From: Donna M. Golden RN, MSN, ANP-c, FCNS- First appointed President of the American Footcare Nurses Association (AFCNA)

Re: Support of Bill S2116

Date: March 1, 2026

Chair of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee

My Name is Donna M. Golden and I live in Rockland Massachusetts.

I am writing today to urge you to support Bill S2116, which would permit a nurse who has the appropriate knowledge and can demonstrate clinical competency to provide routine home foot care services. Nurses in general perform much more complex care on a daily basis than paring toenails. Nurses insert Intravenous needles into veins, access porta catheters to administer chemo therapy and draw blood, insert urinary catheters, perform gastric lavage. We teach people how to give their insulin, monitor insulin pumps and manage their diabetes. For podiatrists, our fellow health care providers to insinuate that we as nurses do not understand the complexities of the vascular, structure and function of the diabetic foot is not only insulting but bears witness to the fact that they do not know what we do or can do.

As a nurse of almost 50 years I have seen the results of personal neglect. I ran a wound center for 14 years. People would come in with wounds after injuring themselves. They often had long toenails with fungus and painful corns and calluses. They had shoes that did not fit. They had undiagnosed neuropathy, peripheral arterial disease or uncontrolled lower leg swelling causing them not to heal as expected. The reasons they had not sought help earlier were varied:

1. Didn't know where to go
2. Cognitive decline
3. Did not know a Podiatrist or had never gone to one
4. Could no longer reach their feet/ mobility issues
5. Didn't know there was a problem
6. Thought it was a part of natural aging.
7. No longer drove
8. Could no longer do stairs

The American Foot Care Nurses Association (AFCNA) was originally created by a Podiatrist so that the education and training that was provided would fill this gap. Nurses have been going into to the home and meeting people where they are for centuries. We have now formed our own nursing based association with the goals of supporting nurses who specialize in foot care with continuing education and community.

Everyone deserves access to safe, routine foot care in the home. Aging in place often requires family caregivers to step in and provide personal care for loved ones, including routine foot care. Family members often lack skill, knowledge, and confidence in safely providing this care. Passing this bill and allowing nurses to fill this gap is the humane thing to do to promote the

health and wellness of the most vulnerable in our state. Residents and their caregivers in RI deserve access to these services. Rhode Island is the only state in the country preventing trained nurses from providing this care. Massachusetts has had this care in place for many years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donna M. Golden". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping tail.

Donna M. Golden RN, MSN, ANP-c, FCNS
Appointed President of the American Foot Care Nurses Association