



AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION
TREATING OUR FAMILY AND YOURS



March 17, 2017

The Honorable Mark Green
Tennessee State Senate
301 6th Avenue North
Suite 4, Legislative Plaza
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Senator Green:

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and the Tennessee Osteopathic Medical Association (TOMA) are writing in support of Senate Bill 154. This bill after it is amended will add statutory language regarding pain management clinics which does not currently recognize all pain-related certifications offered by the AOA. Tennessee law recognizes osteopathic (DO) and allopathic (MD) physicians as equal, and the AOA and TOMA support these changes in statutory language which reflect the equivalency of DO and MD board certifications.¹ Currently the state affords DOs with AOA subspecialty certification in pain medicine the rights and privileges outlined in this section, however, equally trained and qualified osteopathic anesthesiologists are excluded because their examination was developed after the law was adopted. We are simply asking that the law be amended to recognize these individuals as pain management specialists and allow them to act as a medical director in a state approved pain management clinic.

The AOA represents nearly 130,000 osteopathic physicians (DOs) and osteopathic medical students, promotes public health, encourages scientific research, serves as the primary certifying body for DOs and is the accrediting agency for osteopathic medical schools. More information on DOs/osteopathic medicine can be found at www.osteopathic.org. TOMA is a professional medical organization that represents approximately 2,000 DOs providing patient care in Tennessee.

The AOA and TOMA believe that the amendments provided in this bill serve to maintain the original intent of Tennessee's pain management clinic requirements by ensuring that only qualified physicians with advanced training and competency demonstration in pain practice can provide this care to Tennessee patients. We share the concerns of the state legislature in wanting to address the nation's prescription drug epidemic, but want to stress that there is a balance that is required to not restrict access to pain care for patients with a legitimate medical need. Tennessee law already prohibits discrimination against DOs who have been awarded board certification by specialty boards recognized by either the AOA or its allopathic counterpart, the American Board of Medical Specialties, and this bill provides corrections to unify this section with existing State law.²

¹ See T.C.A. § 63-9-106(c).

² *Id.*

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The AOA and TOMA thank you for your leadership in introducing SB 154. This bill as amended is also supported by the Tennessee Medical Association. Should you need any additional information, please feel free to contact Nick Schilligo, AOA's Associate Vice President for State Government Affairs, at nschilligo@osteopathic.org or (312) 202-8185.

Sincerely,



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President, AOA



Michael Bernui, DO
President, TOMA

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