

February 9, 2018

Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson, Chair
Senate Health Care Committee
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Support Senate Bill 1547

Dear Chair Monnes Anderson, Vice-Chair DeBoer, and members of the committee:

Chiropractic sports physicians have been making the call to return to play in Oregon for many decades serving in the capacity as the “team doctor.” In 2015, chiropractic sports physicians were inappropriately left out of legislation that specifically listed the health care professionals given authority to return an athlete to play. As a consequence, chiropractors all around Oregon who had acted in the capacity of team doctor were suddenly and inappropriately no longer authorized to assess an athlete suspected of a concussion and determine if and when that student athlete could return to play and learning.

Chiropractic sports physicians serve on the medical teams of nearly every NFL and NHL team as well as numerous other professional team sports, and have served on every US Olympic Medical Team since the 1984 games. Though currently able to clear some of the world’s top professional athletes, currently Oregon’s chiropractic physicians cannot clear a high school student athlete. This nonsensical situation is not in the best interest of Oregon’s student athletes and this proposed legislation will remedy this.

A chiropractic sports physician’s clinical course work includes, but is not limited to, diagnoses of concussion, pathophysiology of concussion, immune/inflammatory responses, and return to play and learning guidelines. These guidelines were recently updated at the 2017 Berlin Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport meeting. Though chiropractic physicians specializing in sports injury are exceptionally well trained having completed hundreds of hours of post-doctorate training, the Oregon Chiropractic Association supports the additional training required in SB-1547.

Statewide there is a paucity of trained health care providers who can adequately assess an athlete suspected of a concussion and this is especially true in Oregon’s rural areas. This proposed legislation will in part, help remedy this situation improving safety for our student athletes. We urge your support of SB-1547.

Sincerely,

Vern A. Saboe, Jr., DC, DACAN, FICC, DABFP, FACO (Oregon Chiropractic Association)