

a podiatrist may demonstrate competency to perform surgery on the hindfoot and ankle, the podiatrist does not have the medical training necessary to diagnose and treat complications from the surgery. For example, the orthopaedic surgeons assert that there is a greater risk of infection spreading from the hindfoot to the leg, than from surgery to the upper foot, and if not properly treated it can lead to amputation below the knee.

Opponents also disagree that the bill provides sufficient safeguards in the hospital credentialing requirements. They argue that while there is a national orthopaedic accreditation process, there are no universally accepted national standards for the practice of podiatry. Consequently, they claim there will be variation among hospitals on how onerous the credentialing committees will be.

I am aware that 24 other states have passed similar or broader laws expanding the scope of practice for podiatrists. Notwithstanding that, when the issue is the quality of medical care received by the public and the questions raised are as serious as those concerning Senate Bill 428, I believe we owe the citizens of Maryland a strict standard of review. No one has argued that taking a cautious approach would be detrimental to the quality of care we now receive. In fact, given the serious contradictions apparent here, I feel this is the only prudent course to take. Therefore, I am directing the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, in consultation with the Maryland Podiatric Medical Association, the Maryland Orthopaedic Society, and other interested parties, to study and develop a proposal that addresses the concerns of all parties involved.

For these reasons, I have decided to veto Senate Bill 428.

Sincerely,
William Donald Schaefer
Governor

Senate Bill No. 428

AN ACT concerning

Podiatry – Practice of Podiatry – Definition and Requirements

FOR the purpose of altering the definition of “practice podiatry” to include the capability of a licensed podiatrist to diagnose or surgically, medically, or mechanically treat any ailment of the human ankle and certain other related ~~governing~~ structures; providing certain exceptions; requiring licensed podiatrists to complete a certain program under certain circumstances; requiring a licensed podiatrist to perform certain surgical procedures of the ankle in a licensed hospital or ~~freestanding~~ surgical center under certain circumstances; requiring certain hospitals and related institutions to include in their bylaws, rules, or regulations certain provisions; and generally relating to the practice of podiatry.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Health Occupations

Section 16–101(f)

Annotated Code of Maryland