

1 INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2023-142

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3 REQUESTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND  
4 LABOR STUDY THE MODERNIZATION OF THE ARKANSAS ATHLETIC TRAINERS  
5 ACT AND RECOMMEND CHANGES TO UPDATE THE LANGUAGE TO REFLECT  
6 MODERN EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS.

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8 WHEREAS, athletic trainers are highly qualified, multi-skilled health  
9 care professionals that must graduate from an accredited educational program  
10 and pass a comprehensive certification; and

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12 WHEREAS, fifty (50) states, as well as Washington D.C., license or  
13 regulate the practice of athletic training; and

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15 WHEREAS, athletic training education has made significant changes since  
16 the establishment of the Arkansas Athletic Trainers Act, § 17-93-401 et seq.,  
17 in 1995; and

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19 WHEREAS, the scope of practice of athletic trainers covers several  
20 diverse domains, including without limitation issues related to:

- 21 (1) Risk reduction, wellness, and health literacy;  
22 (2) Assessment, evaluation, and diagnosis;  
23 (3) Critical incident management;  
24 (4) Therapeutic intervention; and  
25 (5) Healthcare administration and professional responsibility;

26 and

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28 WHEREAS, athletic trainers should practice to the fullest extent of  
29 their licensure, accreditation, certification, and education for the health  
30 and safety of the public; and

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32 WHEREAS, other individual states and the federal government employ  
33 athletic trainers in a variety of settings to treat a variety of patients;  
34 and

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36 WHEREAS, research demonstrates that access to an athletic trainer saves

1 lives, improves quality of life, decreases missed workdays, and decreases  
2 healthcare associated costs; and

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4 WHEREAS, to increase patient access to health care, reduce healthcare  
5 costs, and promote efficient and timely health care in this state, the  
6 General Assembly should modernize the scope of practice laws for athletic  
7 trainers to reflect the Role Delineation Study/Practice Analysis and the most  
8 recent Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education Educational  
9 Standards; and

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11 WHEREAS, there is an immediate need for athletic trainers in the state  
12 of Arkansas, but it is difficult to recruit to those positions because other  
13 states allow a more favorable scope of practice,

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15 NOW THEREFORE,

16 BE IT PROPOSED BY THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND LABOR  
17 OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

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19 THAT the Senate Committee on Public Health, Welfare, and Labor study  
20 ways to attract more athletic trainers to the State of Arkansas by updating  
21 the Arkansas Athletic Trainers Act, § 17-93-401 et seq., to reflect modern  
22 educational standards of the athletic trainer, including without limitation:

- 23 (1) Populations that athletic trainers treat;  
24 (2) Settings where athletic trainers work and practice;  
25 (3) How athletic trainers are supervised;  
26 (4) Modification of temporary licensure for athletic trainers;

27 and

- 28 (5) Fees and penalties imposed on athletic trainers.  
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30 Respectfully submitted,

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34 Senator Clint Penzo

35 District 31

36 Prepared by: JMB/JMB