

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2430

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Commerce & Labor, February 28, 2014

Title: An act relating to athletic trainers.

Brief Description: Concerning athletic trainers.

Sponsors: House Committee on Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Riccelli, Schmick and Ormsby).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/17/14, 81-16.

Committee Activity: Commerce & Labor: 2/24/14, 2/28/14 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Holmquist Newbry, Chair; Braun, Vice Chair; Conway, Ranking Member; Hasegawa, Hewitt, King and Kohl-Welles.

Staff: Mac Nicholson (786-7445)

Background: Athletic trainers are licensed and regulated by the Department of Health. The scope of practice for athletic trainers is specified in statute and rule, and is generally limited to prevention, assessment, treatment, rehabilitation, and reconditioning of athletic injuries. The treatment, rehabilitation, and reconditioning of athletic injuries must be conducted in accordance with guidelines established with a licensed health care provider. There is no continuing education requirement for athletic trainers.

An individual who is injured at work can seek treatment from any provider in the industrial insurance medical provider network. Physical medicine services for an injured worker will be covered under industrial insurance if the services are provided by a medical or osteopathic physician who is board certified or board qualified in the field of physical medicine and rehabilitation, a licensed physical therapist, or an injured worker's attending doctor. The physical medicine services must be personally performed by the physician, attending doctor, or physical therapist or by a physical therapy assistant employed by and serving under the direction of a physical therapist, physician, or attending doctor. Industrial insurance will not cover services provided by athletic trainers.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill: Athletic training includes the treatment, rehabilitation, and reconditioning of work-related injuries through the application of physical agents and modalities, therapeutic activities and exercise, standard reassessment techniques and procedures, commercial products, and educational programs, under the direct supervision and in accordance with a plan of care for an individual worker established by a provider authorized to provide physical medicine and rehabilitation services for injured workers.

The Department of Health may establish continuing education requirements for athletic trainers by rule.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill adjusts athletic trainer licensure criteria so they can treat injured athletes in accordance with Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) rules. The bill will help provide better outcomes and could save money. Athletic trainers have the education and training to treat workers, and the bill would allow them to do so under appropriate supervision. The bill does not expand the scope of practice; it is simply a fix to a billing problem at L&I. Athletic trainers already treat many injuries and fulfill a respected role of a health care team. Athletic trainers can be a valued resource to get injured workers back on the job. This bill will allow athletic trainers to be involved in the care of L&I patients.

CON: Occupational therapists can employ athletic trainers to assist in treatment, but occupational therapists cannot bill L&I for the athletic trainer time. The licensed occupational therapist or other provider needs to bill L&I for services, and that is an appropriate standard for protecting injured workers. This bill is an inappropriate expansion of the scope of athletic trainers.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Riccelli, prime sponsor; Charlie Brown, Craig Bennett, Dana Gunter, Athletic Trainers Assn.; Martin Matney, WA State Athletic Trainers Assn.

CON: Kate Tudor, WA Occupational Therapy Assn.