

# *Kansas Podiatric Medical Association*

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February 11, 2019

To: Chairman Sen. Gene Suellentrop  
and Members of the Senate Public Health & Welfare Committee  
State Capitol Building  
300 SW 10<sup>th</sup> Ave. Room 118-N  
Topeka, Kansas 66612

From: Scott D. McKenzie

Re: SB61 Podiatric Physicians in Kansas

The undersigned is the Executive Secretary of the Kansas Podiatric Medical Association.

Doctors of podiatric medicine are podiatric physicians and surgeons, qualified by their education, training, and experience to diagnose and treat conditions affecting the lower extremity, i.e., the foot, ankle, and where appropriate, muscles, tissues, and bones of the leg. Podiatrists are the only doctors to receive specialized medical training and board certification solely in the care of the foot and ankle. Since 2007 all United States post medical school podiatric medical residency programs have required three or more years of training. Prior to 2007 some United States programs required only two years of post graduate training.

Podiatric medicine is a medical sub-specialty, focused on a specific part of the anatomy similar to other highly focused sub-specialties, such as what ophthalmology is to the eye, cardiology is to the heart, and otolaryngology is to ear, nose and throat. Within the field of podiatric medicine and surgery, podiatrists can focus on specialty areas such as surgery, sports medicine, biomechanics, geriatrics, pediatrics, orthopedics, or primary care.

Doctors of Podiatric Medicine may be certified for the specialty areas of podiatric orthopedics and primary podiatric medicine by the American Board of Podiatric Medicine. Doctors of Podiatric Medicine may be certified for the specialty area of podiatric surgery by the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery. Board certification is a minimum five year process requiring successful completion of a two part examination process plus successfully performing specified numbers of surgical and medical procedures. Board certification requires completion of a 24 month residency program or a 36 month residency program with different requirements depending on the length of residency completed.

In 2014, the Kansas legislature amended K.S.A. 65-2002(d) to require any Doctor of Podiatric Medicine performing rear foot / ankle reconstructive surgery to have completed a three year surgical residency program **and** be either board certified or progressing towards board certification. By that amendment Kansas became the first and only state establishing by statute directives to hospitals and surgical centers specifying which doctors may be granted surgical privileges based on

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a candidates length of residency or board certification. The restriction applied only to Doctors of Podiatric Medicine. General Practitioners and Orthopedic Surgeons performing rear foot / ankle procedures are not required to be board certified or progressing towards board certification.

As a result of the 2014 K.S.A. 65-2002(d) amendments Doctors of Podiatric Medicine who had completed a 24 month residency and who were board certified could no longer perform rear foot / ankle procedures in Kansas. This is primarily an issue in the metro Kansas City area where most practicing DPM's are licensed in both Kansas and Missouri. Before this change, board certification in such surgery was the benchmark considered by hospitals and surgical centers when granting surgical privileges. All U.S. post doctoral surgical residencies are now three to five years. Because of the 2014 Kansas amendments, older and more experienced Doctors of Podiatric Medicine (with less than a three year residency when trained) and their patients are forced to utilize hospitals and surgical centers outside of Kansas for these procedures. The 2014 amendments resulted in Kansas DPM's and their patients crossing state lines to Missouri hospitals and surgical centers for these medical procedures. Likewise, well qualified Missouri DPM's licensed in Kansas could no longer perform these medical procedures at a Kansas hospital or surgical center.

SB61 is an attempt to address this issue. The language is a compromise arrived at after discussions between members of the Kansas Podiatric Medical Association and the Kansas Medical Society. SB61 retains the requirement that Doctors of Podiatric Medicine performing rear foot /ankle procedures be board certified or progressing towards board certification. If approved and signed into law, SB61 would once again allow Doctors of Podiatric Medicine who prior to 2007 completed a 24 month surgical residency and are board certified or progressing towards board certification to once again perform rear foot / ankle medical procedures.

On behalf of the Kansas Podiatric Medical Association, we urge committee approval of SB61 so it may be considered by the Kansas legislature.

Respectfully,

Scott D. McKenzie  
Executive Secretary

SDM/sgm