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# HOWARD MARKLEIN

STATE SENATOR • 17<sup>TH</sup> SENATE DISTRICT

## February 14, 2017 Assembly Committee on Health Testimony on Assembly Bill 942

Good Afternoon!

Thank you Chairman Sanfelippo and committee members for taking the time to hear testimony on Assembly Bill 942. This bill would enroll Wisconsin in the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact.

The Physical Therapy Licensure Compact (PTLC) allows certified physical therapists in good standing to practice in multiple states by streamlining the licensing process. As a state senator that represents a boarder district, removing barriers for physical therapists is important to meet the demands of our communities. Allowing a multi-state license gives more freedom to physical therapists, but also would allow clinics to hire faster and fill vacancies. The PTLC removes one layer of administrative burden for professionals looking to relocate to boarder areas. Allowing cross state licensure will have a positive impact to rural, underserved areas of our state.

The legislature has already recognized the need to eliminate unnecessary red tape for medical professionals by enrolling Wisconsin in similar compacts for nurses and physicians. This bill would extend the same benefits to physical therapists.

Fourteen other states have already adopted the physical therapy licensure compact. More importantly, this legislation is also being considered by our neighbors Iowa, Minnesota and Illinois. Therefore it is possible that Wisconsin resident physical therapists will soon have the same privileges in nearby states. However, by adopting early Wisconsin would gain a leg up on our neighbors, allowing physical therapists from neighboring states to fill vacancies in boarder areas.

It is important to note that this bill keeps important safeguards in place to protect patients. By streamlining communication with other states we will be able to ensure bad actors cannot gain licensure and practice in Wisconsin.

This bill is supported by the Wisconsin Physical Therapy Association and has received strong bipartisan support in both houses of the legislature. I would appreciate your support for this common sense proposal as well. Thank you for your time.



**Wisconsin Physical Therapy Association**

A CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION

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February 14, 2018

To: Assembly Committee on Health

Representative Sanfelippo (Chair)

Representative Bernier (Vice-Chair)

Representative Edming

Representative Skowronski

Representative Kremer

Representative Wichgers

Representative Murphy

Representative Jacque

Representative Kolste

Representative Zamarripa

Representative Subeck

Representative C. Taylor

**Re: Testimony in Support of AB 942, Physical Therapy Licensure Compact**

Representative Sanfelippo and members of the committee, my name is Connie Kittleson and I am President of the Wisconsin Physical Therapy Association. I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak in favor of Assembly Bill 942.

In 2014, the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy determined that an interstate physical therapy licensure compact would **improve consumer access** to physical therapy services by **reducing regulatory barriers** to interstate mobility and cross-state practice. The American Physical Therapy Association was involved in the drafting of the Physical Therapy Interstate Licensure Compact (Compact) language and continues to support its implementation.

In April of 2017, after 10 states passed the compact legislation, the Compact was officially enacted. The Compact Commission formed and passed rules clarifying provisions of the legislation and governing the process associated with practicing with a Compact Privilege. The Wisconsin Physical Therapy Association supports these rules and feels that the legislation and compact rules would allow citizens greater access to services while still maintaining all our state's expectations for continued competence in physical therapy practice and jurisprudence.

The nursing and medical professions in Wisconsin have similar compacts in Wisconsin and like the Nursing Licensure Compact and the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact, this compact will allow Wisconsin to more rapidly respond to the needs of an increasingly mobile society and improve access to care while at the same time **preserving our state's regulatory authority**.

The Compact may significantly benefit **military families**. When members of our nation's military receive permanent change of station orders, there is currently significant administrative burden for their spouses to become licensed in a new state. Many military spouses pursue careers in healthcare fields such as physical therapy because these careers are portable. However, the challenge of obtaining and renewing licensure in multiple states without the existence of an interstate compact is challenging. Given that military families move 6-9 times over the course of the service member's military career, the burden is significant. The Compact would ease that burden for military spouses as well as for service members who would like to deliver pro bono care outside of their military service.

The Compact may also help patients in **underserved areas** by giving them greater access to licensed physical therapists (PTs) and physical therapist assistants (PTAs). Decreasing the regulatory burden for cross-state practice may PTs and PTAs to more easily fulfill the needs in **both urban and rural areas** that lack adequate practitioners.

Also, as healthcare begins to incorporate more delivery of care via **telemedicine**, portability of licensure will become increasingly important. The Compact can make this process less cumbersome allow for greater access to modern methods of healthcare delivery.

With passage of the Compact, Wisconsin would still preserve its regulatory authority protecting the citizens of our state. A person practicing with a Compact Privilege would practice under the laws of the state in which the patient is located. PTs and PTAs in remote states practicing with a Compact Privilege in Wisconsin would be held accountable to the same laws and standards as PTs and PTAs whose primary license is in Wisconsin.

The structure and benefits gained by implementation of the Compact have garnered broad support from a wide variety of groups including:

- Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB)
- National Military Family Association
- American Physical Therapy Association – Federal Physical Therapy Section
- American Telemedicine Association
- Citizen Advocacy Center (CAC)
- National Association for the Support of Long Term Care (NASL)
- Athletico Physical Therapy, Ltd.
- Cross Country Healthcare
- HPA The Catalyst

To date, 15 states have passed the Compact. An additional 8 states, including Wisconsin, have introduced the legislation this session. The state chapters for APTA of all states bordering Wisconsin have intention to introduce the legislation in upcoming sessions. **The Compact is expected to become operational for licensees this year.** The WPTA believes that now is the time for Wisconsin to pass the Physical Therapy Interstate Licensure Compact and join the states who are rapidly responding to 21<sup>st</sup> century health care needs.

I thank you for your time and for allowing me to speak. I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Sincerely,



Connie Kittleson, PT, DPT  
President  
Wisconsin Physical Therapy Association



"Get Moving, Keep Moving, Enjoy Life"

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February 14, 2018

**To:** Assembly Committee on Health

Representative Sanfelippo (Chair)  
Representative Bernier (Vice-Chair)  
Representative Edming  
Representative Skowronski  
Representative Kremer  
Representative Wichgers  
Representative Murphy  
Representative Jacque  
Representative Kolste  
Representative Zamarripa  
Representative Subeck  
Representative C. Taylor

**Re:** Testimony on AB-942, The Physical Therapy Licensure Compact

Good afternoon Representative Sanfelippo and members of the Assembly Committee on Health. My name is Dr. Brett Roberts and I am here to testify in favor of AB 942. My perspective comes from that of a small business owner with multiple clinics. I also serve as the Wisconsin Physical Therapy Association's Legislative Chair.

Of the five clinics that I own and operate in western and central Wisconsin, one of those is on the border of Wisconsin and Minnesota, located in La Crosse. We serve patients in La Crosse, as well as Wisconsin Rapids, Berlin, Plainfield and Amherst and have plans to open an additional clinic in Arcadia.

One of the challenges that we face is finding therapists who are able to fill in at our clinic on a temporary basis to assist with patient coverage when a full-time therapist is out ill, on maternity leave, or utilizing their paid time off to help avoid the burnout issue that is prevalent in our profession.

Passing this legislation would create additional opportunities for us to meet our labor need and ensure a greater continuity of care for our Wisconsin based patients. This legislation would benefit not just our practice, but all practices – especially those located along Wisconsin's borders.

Labor issues also impact our central Wisconsin clinics in the Stevens Point region. Currently we are looking to fill a vacant position to allow our thriving practice to continue to grow. When we look to hire

a new therapist, there is a time delay from when that person is able to start practicing based on delays in insurance credentialing. Part of the process to credential insurance is being able to list an eligible Wisconsin license on the applications to become an enrolled provider. A major benefit of the compact is that a physical therapist licensed in a member state can obtain a compact privilege to practice in a remote state without needing to obtain a state-specific license to practice in that state. The compact will help alleviate this regulatory burden and help expedite this process. Also, since all physical therapists have passed a national board exam and treat a significant number of patients who are covered by Medicare (a national payer), the system has already been created to ensure competency has been achieved.

As previously mentioned by my colleagues, the nursing and medical professions in Wisconsin have similar compacts in Wisconsin and like the Nursing Licensure Compact and the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact, this compact will allow Wisconsin to more rapidly respond to the needs of an increasingly mobile society and improve access to care while at the same time **preserving our state's regulatory authority**.

Thank you for taking the time to address this issue and for allowing me to speak in favor of Assembly Bill 942, and thank you to both Rep. Rob Stafsholt and Sen. Howard Marklein for authoring this bill. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Brett Roberts, DPT, WPTA Legislative Chair, Small business owner

TO: Chairman Sanfelippo and members of the Assembly Committee on Health

FR: Lynn Steffes, PT, DPT

DA: February 14, 2018

RE: Testimony in support of Assembly Bill 942, Physical Therapy Licensure Compact

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Good Afternoon Chairman Sanfelippo and members of the Assembly Committee on Health. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of Assembly Bill 942.

I would like to first introduce myself as Lynn Steffes, PT, DPT – I have been a Physical Therapist in Wisconsin since 1981. I have a specialty in working with children and adults with neurological challenges.

I have called Wisconsin my home all of my life. I love it here! However, with the weather being what it is and my adult kids moving around to pursue their careers I find that I may be wintering or doing extended visits elsewhere... especially January through April!!! I don't think that I am alone among experienced physical therapists of my "vintage". I hope to take my skills and passion for working with aging adults to other states without jumping over major licensing issues. The Physical Therapy Licensure Compact enables me to do that- while still offering the ever-increasing need for high quality physical therapy for our growing Medicare population.

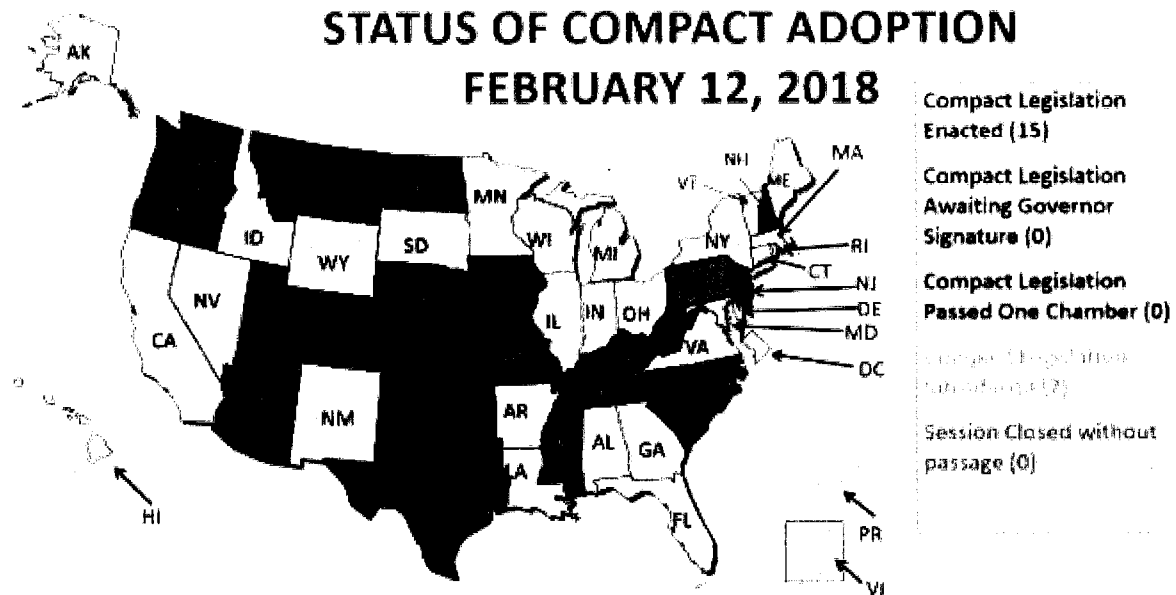
The Physical Therapy Licensure Compact is designed to achieve the following objectives:

1. Increase public access to physical therapy services by providing for the mutual 10 recognition of other member state licenses;
2. Enhance the states' ability to protect the public's health and safety
3. Encourage the cooperation of member states in regulating multi-state physical therapy practice
4. Support spouses of relocating military members;
5. Enhance the exchange of licensure, investigative, and disciplinary information between member states;
6. Allows a remote state to hold a provider of services with a compact privilege in that state accountable to that state's practice standards.

Specifically, "compact privilege" means the authorization granted by a remote state to allow a licensee from another member state to practice as a physical therapist or work as a physical therapist assistant in the remote state under its laws and rules. The practice of physical therapy occurs in the member state where the patient/client is located at the time of the patient/client encounter.

Protections are offered by holding the licensee accountable for knowledge of the laws and rules governing the practice of physical therapy in a state.

*April 25, 2017: PT Compact officially enacted!*



Endorsed:

FSBPT appreciates the broad support received for the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact. From consumer groups to policy organizations, the following have publicly endorsed the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact.

- **Athletico Physical Therapy, Ltd.**
- **American Physical Therapy Association – Federal Physical Therapy Section**
- **The American Telemedicine Association**
- **Citizen Advocacy Center (CAC)**
- **Cross Country Healthcare**
- **Federal Physical Therapy Section of the American Physical Therapy Association**
- **Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB)**
- **HPA The Catalyst**
- **National Association for the Support of Long Term Care (NASL)**
- **National Military Family Association**

I would also like to thank Representative Rob Stafsholt and Senator Howard Marklein for introducing AB-942, and to the committee for holding a public hearing on this important legislation. I would be happy to take any questions you might have.

Thank you,

Lynn Steffes



Rita B. Shapiro, PT, MA, DPT  
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13 February 2018

State of Wisconsin Assembly Health Committee  
Chairman Joe Sanfelippo  
Room 306 North, State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53708

**RE: Support for Assembly Bill 942 – related to PT Licensure Compact**

Honorable Members of the Assembly Health Committee:

Having served in the United States Navy and the Public Health Service for a combined 28 years; I would be honored to provide my perspective on the challenges that my colleagues in the military and their spouses face as it relates to being a physical therapy provider due to frequent military ordered transfers. Yes, a majority of the permanent change of station (PCS) orders are for 3-4 years however, depending on the needs of the service they are at times with in very short periods ranging from 12-18 months.

This poses much challenge not only due to the stresses of the move but also loss of or inability secure employment for the spouses. For growing families, the spouse must also work to provide for their family as the military income of young enlisted or of junior officers is often time quite inadequate. When this is compounded by having to apply for a new license so as to even apply for a job in the new location; I personally have observed that many just give up. What a terrible loss to the profession and to the community who could benefit from the skills and experience of these highly talented professionals.

To obtain a reciprocity leads to multitude of costs including but not limited to application fee, verification fee, national board examination results transfer to name a few. Still it can take as long as one year to get a license, and by that time the clinician has been out of practice thus making them less competitive.

Not only spouses, I know some active duty members seek to augment their income by working over weekends. I can personally attest to that as I had to do exactly that as a junior officer. However, although we all take a national examination for licensing every state has its own unique barriers. Thus, making the process more arduous than it needs to be.

It is highly encouraging to see the efforts the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) along with the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) and the Council of State Governments are proposing for the development and introduction of the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact (PTLC). I urge you to adopt and pass the PTLC to help ease the challenges of obtaining multiple licenses to practice physical therapy so that the highly qualified providers can integrate into the community and be employed to provide valuable physical therapy services.

Thank you for giving this issue your strong consideration.

Very Respectfully

*RBShapiro*

Rita B. Shapiro





Dear Chairman Sanfelippo and members of the Assembly Committee on Health,

We are writing to voice our support for the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact, AB-942. Founded in 1980, OSI Physical Therapy is an independent, physical therapist-owned PT practice with 9 clinics around the Twin Cities metro area and western Wisconsin.

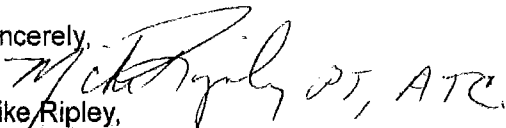
We encourage the passage of AB-942, which would improve access to physical therapy services and ensure continuity of care. As an independent, multi-location physical therapy provider operating in both Minnesota and Wisconsin, we know first-hand the opportunities and challenges operating on the border between two states.

The Physical Therapy Licensure Compact would provide more options for our patients, our therapists, as well as help reduce some administrative burden for us and other practices who operate along Wisconsin's borders. By allowing physical therapists to be licensed through a compact agreement, rather than seeking licensure in multiple states, we can accomplish greater efficiencies while still maintaining each state's scope of practice laws.

The passage of this legislation will also result in greater flexibility for our patients to be treated by their PT in either Wisconsin or Minnesota, increasing the quality of care and improving patient outcomes. In fact, many physical therapists travel with athletes and sports teams all over the United States. Approval of AB-942, in addition to more states joining the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact, will allow our physical therapists to provide more consistent care to clients as they travel to compete in other states.

We want to take this opportunity to thank Representative Rob Stafsholt and Senator Howard Marklein for introducing AB-942, and to the committee for holding a public hearing on this important legislation. OSI Physical Therapy fully supports the passage and enactment into law of AB-942.

Sincerely,

  
Mike Ripley,  
OSI Physical Therapy

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