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THE MAINE SENATE
131st Legislature

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Testimony of Senator Stacy Brenner introducing LD 1749, "An Act to Establish the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact"
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services
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Senator Bailey, Representative Perry, and Distinguished Colleagues on the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services, my name is Stacy Brenner. I represent Senate District 30, which includes all of Gorham and most of Scarborough. I am pleased to introduce LD 1749, "An Act to Establish the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact."

This legislation would allow Maine to join the Physical Therapy Compact, which is an interstate agreement between member states to allow greater access to physical therapy services. Currently, physical therapists cannot practice across state lines. This compact allows for interstate mobility for physical therapy providers through a state-developed collaborative structure that protects the public and expands consumer access to physical therapy services.

Passing this legislation would also improve accessibility of physical therapy to Mainers statewide, especially for our rural communities. As of now, physical therapists are relegated to practicing in Maine only. Even if they practice close to New Hampshire, they cannot treat patients a short distance away because of a state border. Joining the PT compact would expand access to these essential services for patients.

Physical therapy providers in the states that join the PT Compact won't have to obtain multiple state licenses. Instead, they obtain a "compact privilege" to work across state lines with another compact state, which includes services provided both in person and via telehealth. Joining the Interstate compact also wouldn't affect the scope of practice in Maine. Licensees with compact privileges must abide by the practice rules of the state in which they are practicing. States do not cede their authority to discipline their own licensees. Additionally, joining this compact does not affect MaineCare or commercial insurance rates and reimbursements.

Twenty-nine states are already issuing PT Compact privileges, including NH. All other New England states have introduced PT Compact legislation. There are only 5 states that have not introduced legislation at all. Let's join the interstate compact initiative with other states in the nation. We do not want to be left behind.

I'd also like to note that this bill is a companion bill to LD 1453. The Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation (OPOR) will recommend a delayed effective date for LD 1749 to allow OPOR time to establish the requirements stipulated in LD 1453.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill. I am happy to answer any questions.