



Testimony in Support of

LD 1749, "An Act to Establish the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact"

May 4, 2023

Senator Bailey, Representative Perry and Honorable Members of the HCIFS Committee:

My name is Gwen Simons. I am a physical therapist and a healthcare lawyer in Scarborough. I'm testifying as the lobbyist for the Maine Chapter of the American Physical Therapy Association ("MEAPTA") in support of LD 1749, An Act to Establish the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact.

The PT Compact is growing fast. It began issuing practice privileges to the first 10 member states in 2018. In the last four years the number of states actively issuing and accepting practice privileges has increased to 29 states, including New Hampshire. This year alone, 12 states, including Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont, Rhode Island, New York and Connecticut, have introduced legislation to join the Compact - leaving only 5 states that have not introduced legislation at all.

We understand that passing this bill will require the Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation (OPOR) to establish FBI-approved fingerprinting and background checks, but OPOR already has to do this for the professions that have already passed compact laws (psychology, occupational therapy and counseling). We also know that the PT Licensure Board will have to promulgate rules for the continuing education requirements in our companion bill, LD 1453, An Act to Amend the Physical Therapist Practice Laws. We are agreeable to the amendment that you are going to hear OPOR recommend – to delay the effective date of this legislation by 2 years – so they have time to do what they need to do. But we don't want to wait any longer or Maine could very well be one of the last states to join the PT Compact. That will not be good for PT licensees or the Maine people who seek PT services.

We also understand that implementation of the PT Compact will come with some increased administrative costs. Maine PT license renewal fees have remained at \$50/year for the last 20 years and are below the average compared to other states. Therefore, MEAPTA believes any increased cost to the licensees to administer the PT Compact is a small price to pay and would be worth it for our licensees to be able to more easily obtain practice privileges in other states.

Thank you for your consideration. I'm happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully,

Gwen Simons, Esq., PT, OCS, FAAOMPT

Gwen Simons, MEAPTA Lobbyist

