

**HOUSE PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE COMMITTEE
TESTIMONY ON HB 2727, P.N. 4234**

October 23, 2008

Colleen Chancler, Southeast District Director, Pennsylvania Physical Therapy Association

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, and invited guests, good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding HB 2727. My name is Colleen Chancler and I am a licensed physical therapist and Director of the Pennsylvania Physical Therapy Association's ("PPTA") Southeast District. I am employed by the University of Pennsylvania Health System as the Site Supervisor for Occupation and Physical Therapy. I am joined today by Ivan Mulligan who is also a licensed physical therapist and is the President Elect of the PPTA. Ivan is a faculty member at St. Francis University and is the Director of Sports and Orthopedic Physical Therapy. We are here today representing the PPTA.

The PPTA supports the concept behind HB 2727 that health care practitioners be required to wear an identification badge so that patients can be apprised of the identity and licensure credentials of the individuals who are providing them with health care services. In fact, this concept is consistent with the American Physical Therapy Association's policies and positions designed to ensure that the patient is aware of the training and education of the person providing the health care service.

The PPTA does, however, have some concerns with HB 2727 in its current form. First, the PPTA believes that it is important that there be some qualifications placed upon the disciplinary action to be taken against a health care practitioner for violating the requirements of HB 2727. For example, if a licensee forgets his or her identification badge but utilizes a temporary identification that is not in strict compliance with HB 2727, the PPTA does not believe that a disciplinary action is appropriate. Also, a facility may require that an employee wear a particular style identification badge and not the badge provided by the licensure board. In such a situation, it appears that there should be some obligation on the facility in addition to the licensee as the facility would have control over the design and distribution of the identification badge.

Secondly, the PPTA is concerned with how HB 2727 will affect physical therapist students and physical therapist assistant students. If a facility elects to utilize the identification badges issued by the board, a mechanism should be put in place to account for students, who will not be directly covered by the board and will therefore not be eligible to receive a board issued identification. Otherwise, facilities would be required to develop independent identification badges and have them approved by the board for the sole purpose of use by students. Depending on the interpretation of HB 2727, this may also be an issue for physical therapists and physical therapist assistants functioning under a temporary license.

Finally, the PPTA believes that it is important that adequate lead time be included within the legislation to allow for a licensee to be issued an identification badge. For example, if HB 2727 should pass, it will likely take large facilities a number of months to issue identification badges to each of their employees. Also on the issue of timing and enforcement, the PPTA has concerns with individuals who begin work prior to receiving a badge and whether or not a grace period for compliance should be included.

Should legislation similar to HB2727 be introduced and passed into law in the future, we respectfully ask that this committee and the Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs consider the PPTA's comments in developing regulations and any additional exceptions.

On behalf of the PPTA, thank you for providing the Association with this opportunity to testify before the Committee.