



Northwest Rehabilitation Associates, Inc.

Serving you with specialist care and a personal touch



Thursday, May 2, 2019

Senator Rob Wagner, Chair
Senator Chuck Thomsen, Vice Chair
Senator Sara Gelser
Senator Mark Haas
Senator Dallas Heard

Senator Wagner and distinguished members of the committee,

I have been a practicing physical therapist since 1991. I am the president and co-owner of Northwest Rehabilitation Associates of Salem Oregon. I have served as the vice president for the American Physical Therapy Association's Neurology Section and I am board certified as a clinical specialist in Neurologic Physical Therapy. I have also published over 30 professional articles and have been a guest lecturer and speaker both nationally and internationally, covering 6 countries and 48 states. I also hold the distinction of being the only physical therapist to have received the national award for clinical excellence in two different categories (neurology and geriatrics).

I currently serve on the advisory committee for Western Oregon University's Doctorate in Physical Therapy (DPT) initiative. Health care continues to be a dynamic environment with changes in both practices and patient needs. The combination of these changes and an older population that is more active has resulted in a significant shortage of qualified physical therapists.

Oregon has two DPT programs at private colleges, both based near Portland. The state desperately needs to add physical therapy programs and especially by public universities, for affordability and geographical representation/reach. Therapists that matriculate in the Willamette Valley are more likely to stay and practice in the same. I am impressed with the organization of the administrators at WOU and can attest that they have worked in very diligent and thoughtful manner in crafting their DPT proposal. I am proud to be a part of this process and organization. The national standards to receive accreditation are so rigorous and detailed that any DPT program that is accredited is a high-quality program.

ORS 352.011 is an *unintentional* barrier that was created without the foresight of growth opportunities such as these. If it (352.011) is not changed, this will prevent WOU from reducing this critical and growing workforce and quality of life shortage. WOU has worked with a broad assortment of Oregon health care professionals representing local physical therapy businesses such as Northwest Rehabilitation Associates, regional hospitals and assisted living providers. I am confident that their proposed program will produce high quality graduates that will help meet the need for physical therapists in Oregon.

I strongly endorse WOU's effort to develop a DPT program and recommend that your committee approve the requested amendment to HB 2871 that updates ORS 352.011 so that WOU can continue its development of its DPT program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Studer', with a stylized, cursive script.

Mike Studer, PT, MHS, NCS, CEEAA, CWT, CSST

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2011 and 2014 National Physical Therapist of the Year award winner

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