

Submitter: Ashleigh Walters  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Education  
Measure: HB2959

Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs Wright and Hudson, and members of the committee -

My name is Ashleigh Walters, and I am a physical therapist who lives and works in the Portland Metro area. I have been practicing as a licensed physical therapist for over 10 years, all of which have been in public early childhood and school-based settings.

As a trained health professional working in public education, I have encountered scenarios where the OARs defining my role and scope as a licensed health care professional have not aligned with the OARs that apply to special education. The community of health care providers serving students in public education believes our students deserve the best possible education, and we know the barriers that provide for the conflicting rules to our licensure and our role in public education are systemic - the solutions will require long-term commitment and dedication.

One clear concern expressed by members from all licensed professionals working in educational settings is the disconnect between licensure requirements and the realities of practice in schools. We need HB 2959 to create a task force to examine the scope of practice for each type of licensed health professional in schools, establish criteria to help define when procedures are inconsistent with scope of practice, and provide recommendations for alignment.

Thank you for your time today and I encourage the committee to vote YES on HB 2959.