

To: House Committee on Education  
From: Wendy Jones, Physical Therapist  
RE: Support for HB 2959

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

My name is Wendy Jones and I am here today as a physical therapist of 20+ years, and I am here to express my support for House Bill 2959.

As a trained health professional in school, I am both licensed and practice within school systems and settings that can sometimes be in conflict with one another. We believe our students deserve the best possible educational journey at every turn and we know that the barriers that provide for these conflicting rules to our licensure are systemic, so we know the solutions will take long-term commitment and dedication.

Assignment Safety: PTs are in charge of training educators and support staff on how to transfer a child from their wheelchair onto the changing table and in/out of their adapted equipment so that a student may access their education. When our caseloads and school sites are exploding, I just don't have the capacity or time to train effectively, correctly and safely. Both the student's and the support staff's safety and well-being is being sacrificed. In my current district, I am actively supporting students at 12 school sites. Additionally, our district announced they will be reducing our physical therapy team FTE starting next school and I will personally be responsible for 27+ school sites. As an educator, they do not understand the role of physical therapy nor my professional responsibility to the students (and staff) I serve.

As a physical therapist, it is my professional judgment and our physical therapy practice act defines the intervention I provide. In education, as health care professionals we are often the lone wolf where we are 1 professional in a school with 30 educators. Majority of administrators in education hold an educational license, not a health care license, yet they are making decisions that affect our role and our licenses. With our caseloads continuing to grow and grow, we are often in a position where we are forced to delegate tasks that put our license as well as other staff licenses and safety at risk.

One clear concern expressed by members from all licensed professionals working in an education setting is the disconnect between requirements of licensure and the realities of practice in schools. That is why we need HB 2959, which will 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.

Wendy Jones, PT, DPT  
Physical Therapist  
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