



September 14, 2022

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL STUDY COMMITTEE ON OCCUPATIONAL LICENSES

RE: Impact of Licensure Process Delays and Request for Action

Dear Committee Members:

For the past 18 months, members of the Physical Therapy Examining Board have received email and phone call complaints regarding the licensing process in Wisconsin. Numerous applicants and employers expressed frustration and personal stories of patient care being affected by the delays in licensing. As a result, the board acted in May of this year with a motion to describe its concerns. As stated in that motion, the Physical Therapy Examining Board is aware of the Legislature's limitations on the Department of Safety and Professional Services' (DPS) ability to increase spending authority and add sufficient staff from its fee revenue. These limitations have created backlogs in licensing timelines and unnecessary delays in physical therapists and physical therapist assistants being licensed in a timely manner. This has resulted in delays in patients receiving care, employers' ability to hire, professionals' ability to treat patients, and to earn income. These limitations have increased the number of complaints to DPS and others about the slow pace of application processing. The Board requests that the legislature increase the staffing and spending authority of DPS without delay and discontinue its practice of lapsing physical therapist and physical therapist assistant license fee program revenue away from DPS and the Physical Therapy Examining Board.

At this time, the board respectfully requests that its concerns be included in your final report, with a recommendation directed to the Joint Committee on Finance to increase position and spending authority.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Shari Berry, PT'.

Shari Berry  
Chairperson, Wisconsin Physical Therapy Examining Board