

Making Cancer History®

November 15, 2016

Mr. Ken Levine
Director, Sunset Advisory Commission
PO Box 13066
Austin, TX 78711

Re: Sunset Advisory Staff Report of the Texas Medical Board

Dear Mr. Levine:

This letter is intended for the Sunset Commission members, prior to the public hearing for the Sunset Advisory Staff Report of the Texas Medical Board (scheduled for December 8 & 9, 2016).

My issue is not addressed by the current Staff report, but is important to the practice of Medical Physics in the state of Texas. There is a branch of Medical Physics related to Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) that has become exceedingly complex over the last 10 years or so. In order to maintain acceptable quality of MRI exams, an advanced level of technical expertise is required. This technical expertise is nearly impossible to achieve without focus on MRI physics and little else.

Our current licensure regulations for Medical Physicists do not include a limited or restricted option for MRI only. This has resulted in several less than optimal conditions in the state of Texas:

- Many facilities are performing sub-optimal MRI exams because they lack the required technical expertise of an MRI physicist.
- Very little MRI development can be done in the state of Texas because these Medical Physicists cannot practice without a license.
- When new MRI technology becomes available, Texas facilities are less likely to be able to utilize it appropriately due to the lack of technical expertise.

The current regulations do not serve the population of this great state; rather, they are definitely diminishing the level of care that our patients can receive, particularly at non-academic medical facilities (which represent the vast majority of Texas healthcare delivery sites).

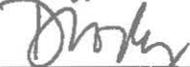
It does not seem that cumbersome to introduce a limited scope license for Medical Physicists that requires appropriate credentials such as board examination (for example, the American Board of Medical Physics offers an annual Board exam specific to the field of MRI physics). The other requirements for licensure would likely remain consistent.

Several national organizations recognize the role of "MRI-Scientist" such as the American College of Radiology (within its imaging accreditation programs), the Joint Commission (a major hospital accreditation organization), and the American Association of Physicists in Medicine.

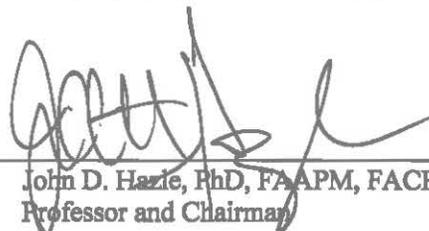
Please put this issue on the list of items for the Sunset Advisory Staff to consider. It would require a minor change to the current regulation but has the potential to positively impact a very sizeable proportion of our state's population.

Thank you very much for your attention to this issue. Please contact me directly at 713-563-2712 if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Sincerely,



Dianna Cody, Ph.D., DABR, FAAPM
Director, Clinical Operations



John D. Hazle, PhD, FAAPM, FACR
Professor and Chairman