From: Sunset Advisory Commission
To: Janet Wood
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Thursday, June 19, 2014 8:25:38 AM

-----Original Message-----
From: sundrupal@capitol.local [mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local]
Sent: Wednesday, June 18, 2014 10:09 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Wednesday, June 18, 2014 - 22:09

Agency: DEPARTMENT STATE HEALTH SERVICES DSHS

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Your Comments About the Staff Report, Including Recommendations Supported or Opposed:
A radiation oncologist prescribes a dose of radiation much the same way a medical oncologist prescribes a dose of medication. The medical oncologist depends on a pharmacist to dispense the medicine and a nurse to administer it. In a similar way, the medical physicist "dispenses" the radiation by making sure the dose delivery systems act exactly as intended and the radiation technologist "administers" the dose by placing the patient in the correct setup and turning on the radiation beam. If one believes that pharmacists should be licensed, then by extension medical physicists should be licensed. Though largely invisible to the cancer patients we treat every day, our job is to certain the patient gets exactly the dose of radiation the oncologist believes is necessary to treat the tumor.

I work at an institution where there are many physicists, more than 70 in total. Whenever I have a question, there is another experienced, board certified, and licensed physicist nearby whom I can ask for help. We have a system of checks and balances so that the responsibility of calibrating a treatment machine does not fall on only one person. However, most radiation facilities are not like ours – there may be only one physicist covering the clinic and no one else to verify that the work was done properly. Therefore it is imperative that the physicist be board certified and qualified for such a position. Licensure helps to guarantee this. Documentation of board certification is required to obtain a license, and proof of continuing education and continued board certification is needed to renew the license. Without licensure, unqualified workers could become medical physicists and those who failed to keep up with current technology or whose board certification were revoked could continue to work unsupervised. Any short term money savings by using less skilled labor would surely be lost when incompetent treatment produces lost revenue and lawsuits.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency: Please keep the licensure requirement for this very highly skilled and necessary profession.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree