

Jerre vanden Bent



Texas Physical Therapy Association

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**Texas Physical Therapy Association
Testimony for the Texas Sunset Commission
Public Hearing - December 8, 2016
On the: Healthcare Licensing Consolidation Project**

**Jerre van den Bent, PT
Texas Physical Therapy Association**

Good evening (afternoon) Mr. Chairman and members of the Texas Sunset Commission. My name is Jerre van den Bent. I am a Physical Therapist and I am representing the Texas Physical Therapy Association, the TPTA. I know that it's been a long day and the hour is late so I will brief and to the point with my remarks. I offer my comments in the hope that it might encourage you to look at the assumptions that have driven this TDLR consolidation proposal and whether this strategy as it applies to the profession of Physical and Occupational Therapy is likely to achieve the desired end.

We appreciate the intent of the consolidation concept...the creation of more efficient and effective state agencies using the TDLR as the baseline for demonstrating consolidation benefit. However, there is also wisdom in the adage; *if it's not broke, don't try to fix it*. The analysis for the PT/OT licensure board produces a clear take away message; **not only is the Physical Therapy licensure board not broken, it outperforms TDLR in every meaningful metric; the cost per licensee at TDLR is \$44, at the PT board it is \$32. The average time to resolve licensee complaints at TDLR is 217 days, at the PT board it is 113—almost twice as long at TDLR. The licensee-to-staff ratio at TDLR is 1,630 per FTE, at the PT board it is 2,125 per FTE.** I suggest that we revisit the Sunset staff's original recommendation that *was the result of months of interaction and dialogue with Sunset policy analysts*...and that was the recommendation published in April, reaffirmed at the June 23rd Sunset hearing, and then published as part of the support documentation for the August 22nd Sunset meeting; **retain the Executive Council of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Examiners as an independent state agency for 12 years through 2029.**

What is the desired objective of the consolidation proposal for Physical and Occupational Therapy? If it's fiscal efficiency the financial data favors an independent PT/OT Board. If it's a more effective disposition of complaints against licensees the data favor an independent PT/OT board. If it's a scalability argument, the suggestion that size matters, the data again favor an independent PT/OT board. The data are facts, but they may not be the metric upon which the decision of whether to consolidate the PT and OT boards in to the TDLR should move forward. Ultimately, the purpose of the state in licensing healthcare professions is to provide for public and patient safety. To that end I would simply defer to the Sunset staff's own words; "...the Executive Council of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Examiners is a stable, well-run agency with an experienced, capable staff."

We extend our sincere appreciation to you for the opportunity to share our comments, thank you.