

Stacia Troshynski Brown, Assistant Clinical Professor
KUMC Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Science Program
Proponent Testimony for HB 2279
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House Health and Human Services Committee

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today in support of HB 2279. My name is Stacia Troshynski Brown, and I am an Assistant Clinical Professor at the University of Kansas Medical Center Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Science Program where I teach students in the doctor of physical therapy program. I have been a faculty member at KUMC since 2015 and have been a physical therapist helping Kansans achieve quality of life and optimal movement for the last (almost) 15 years.

As someone who is not originally from Kansas (I moved from Nebraska to work in Kansas upon graduation from PT school), I know how difficult it is to gain licensure in Kansas. I had licensure in both Nebraska and Missouri prior to gaining my PT licensure in Kansas, having applied for both Missouri and Kansas licensure at the same time. My ability to treat patients at my workplace in Kansas was delayed by weeks as I waited for my licensure to go through. This delay impacted my own finances and, ultimately, my workplace's, as well.

My support for adopting the PT Compact for Kansas, though, does not stem from selfish motives. I may not benefit or utilize a PT Compact in Kansas, but I see first-hand those who definitely will.

As an educator in Kansas, I see first-hand the impact that licensure and, ultimately, mobility, has on the decisions our new professionals make in deciding where to secure employment. Many times, they want flexibility and the options that come with compact licensure. This does not in any way impact their qualifications or readiness to practice or, most-importantly, the safety of the people who they take care of as health professionals. It does, though, accommodate for life's many challenges and, in many cases, life's unexpected changes: a spouse gets a job in another location, a family member becomes ill and requires additional care in a neighboring state, a new grandparent wants to be closer to grandkids and still continue working.

I help our students understand and navigate professional issues throughout their development in school. As part of that training and formation, we discuss and field their questions on licensure and state differences. Many of our 60 graduates per year have questions when they are making decisions about employment. I have many students who have shared personal stories of their frustration and discontent with the State of Kansas not adopting the PT Compact. Our students are attending a top-ranked PT

school and, when they look at a map of licensure privileges, they see that Kansas is the only state that is not part of the PT Compact. This doesn't make sense to them.

With a physical therapy program that is located physically on State Line Road, our students can look out classroom windows and see both Kansas and Missouri. Because of this physical proximity to both states, we see students who, at times, make the decision to choose to live and gain licensure in Missouri to have more flexibility within the PT Compact. This impacts our ability as a state to retain our highly-qualified, locally-trained therapists who we have invested state dollars in for their training.

I believe that adopting the PT Compact in Kansas will solve this issue.

As part of the University of Kansas system, I am proud to be part of an organization that has been rated a Military Friendly Top 10 school, achieving a rating of 5th this year. This commitment to serving our country's servicemen is something I take very seriously, being a daughter of a Vietnam Veteran. Kansas can extend that commitment to being military-friendly once our nation's veterans are out of school. Many military service members relocate across state lines. Enacting Kansas's membership in the PT Compact supports spouses of our military members who seek PT licensure by allowing for a seamless and timely transition to employment opportunities – not the weeks-long delay that I experienced.

As a product of small towns, I support initiatives that improve access and care for rural and underserved areas in Kansas. By joining the PT Compact, PTs who wish to work in rural or underserved areas through employment as a traveling therapist is supportive and the undue administrative burden is reduced. These PTs often travel across state lines to rural or underserved areas when local health care organizations cannot attract permanent PTs to meet their workforce needs. Kansans in rural and under-served areas gain invaluable access to physical therapy services.

As a fiscally-responsible citizen, I recognize that we are in an unprecedented time and, in the midst of budget cuts, choosing to join the PT Compact allows Kansas to free up state resources from the processing of license requests from out-of-state individuals.

As you can see, joining the PT Compact **just makes sense**.

Our one sticking point in Kansas is clear. I speak to other physical therapists across the country with my various roles in the PT profession. I have friends who are PTs and PT educators and PTs on regulatory boards in Missouri and Nebraska and Iowa and Colorado and Arkansas and Oklahoma. None of those states have had an issue with public safety from the adoption of the PT Compact. Kansas needs to join them.

Joining the PT Compact keeps our state-educated therapists right here where they belong: impacting the health of Kansans. It supports our military members and their families who sacrifice for our country. It supports our access to healthcare for our often-forgotten rural areas. It improves efficiencies in our regulatory system.

Please support HB 2279. Our healthcare workers have done so much over the last year. Please support them. Please support our future physical therapists, as well. Thank you.