

HB 1555 -- PHYSICAL THERAPISTS

SPONSOR: Gregory (96)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Professional Registration and Licensing by a vote of 12 to 1.

This bill changes the laws regarding physical therapists so that physical therapists no longer need a prescription or referral from a doctor in order to evaluate and initiate treatment on a patient, as long as the physical therapist has a doctorate of physical therapy degree or has five years of clinical practice as a physical therapist. However, the bill does require a physical therapist to refer to an approved health care provider any patient whose condition is beyond the physical therapist's scope of practice, or any patient who does not demonstrate measurable or functional improvement after 10 visits or 21 business days, whichever occurs first. The physical therapist must also consult with an approved health care provider before continuing therapy if after 10 visits or 21 business days, whichever occurs first, the patient has demonstrated measurable or functional improvement from the physical therapy and the physical therapist believes that continuation of physical therapy is necessary. Continued physical therapy must be in accordance with any direction of the health care provider. The physical therapist must notify the health care provider of continuing physical therapy every 30 days. The bill removes a provision that allows the State Board of Registration for the Healing Arts to file a complaint against a physical therapist who provides physical therapy without a prescription.

This bill is similar to HB 367 (2021), HCS HB 1869 and HB 2287 (2020).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this bill saves time and money and there is no evidence of any rise in costs or risk in other states that do this.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Gregory; Jeff Angus; Arnie C. Dienoff; Chris Marsh; and Jennifer Schneiders, Missouri Physical Therapy Association.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that physicians are more qualified to diagnose an underlined issue and this could lead to a missed diagnosis.

Testifying against the bill were Dr. Quinn J. James; Missouri State Medical Association; Missouri Chiropractic Practice Physicians Association; and the Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians & Surgeons .

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say Signature Medical Group was previously opposed to this bill but is no longer opposed.

Testifying on the bill was Signature Medical Group.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.