

SUBJECT: Extending treatment of a patient by a physical therapist without a referral

COMMITTEE: Public Health — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 9 ayes — Klick, Campos, Jetton, A. Johnson, J. Jones, V. Jones, Price, Smith, Tinderholt

2 nays — Collier, Oliverson

WITNESSES: For — Michael Geelhoed, Texas physical therapy association (*Registered, but did not testify*; Jacquie Benestante, Autism Society of Texas; Chase Bearden, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities; Colette Vallot, Texas Academy of Physician Assistants; Linda Litzinger, Texas Parent to Parent; Caroline Welton, Texas Public Policy Foundation; John Henderson, Torch; Kimberly Moyers; Thomas Parkinson)

Against — Alina Sholar, Texas 400; Blake Hutson, Texas Association of Health Plans; Jimmy Widmer, Texas Medical Association (*Registered, but did not testify*; Tom Banning, Texas Academy of Family Physicians; Matt Abel, Texas Association of Business; David Reynolds, Texas Chapter American College of Physicians Services; Ben Wright, Texas Medical Association; Rachael Reed, Texas Ophthalmological Association; Bobby Hillert, Texas Orthopaedic Association; Jill Sutton, Texas Osteopathic Medical Assn; Clayton Travis, Texas Pediatric Society; Jaime Capelo, Texas 400; Christine Kean, TSAOG)

BACKGROUND: Occupations Code Sec. 453.301(a-1) states a physical therapist may treat a patient for not more than 10 consecutive business days without a referral under certain circumstances. Under sec. 453.301 (a-2), a physical therapist may treat a patient for 15 consecutive business days or less without a referral if the physical therapist possesses a doctoral degree in physical therapy from an accredited program and either has completed a residency fellowship or is certified by the Texas Board of Physical Examiners.

Some have suggested extending the number of days a physical therapist may see a patient without a referral to allow patients to choose the

treatment they believe meets their needs.

DIGEST: CSHB 2553 would extend the number of consecutive business days a physical therapist could treat a patient without a referral from 10 to 20 consecutive business days. The bill would repeal Occupations Code sec. 453.301(a-2).

By December 1, 2023, the Texas Board of Physical Examiners would be required to adopt rules necessary to implement the provisions of the bill.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2023.