



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Eighteenth Congress
First Regular Session

5505

House Bill No. _____

Introduced by REPRESENTATIVE AURELIO D. GONZALES, JR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

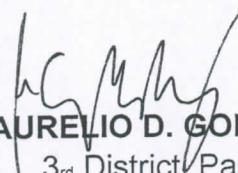
The profession of Physical Therapy, as part of allied health sciences, is as important as nursing. Physical therapists play an important part in treatment and rehabilitation of patients with chronic conditions, illnesses or injuries. Physical therapists act as stewards to their patients to help improve their movement and manage their pain.

It has been 50 years since Republic Act No. 5680 or the Philippine Physical and Occupational Therapy Law, as amended, has been enacted. With the continuous advancements and innovations in the field of science and technology, there is an urgent need to modernize the law governing an estimated 13,000 Physical Therapists¹ in the country. The purpose of the bill is to make physical therapists more responsive to the changes of times.

In view thereof, this bill seeks to create a distinct Board of Physical Therapy which will be responsible in maintaining or attaining high levels of professional, ethical and technical standards for the practice of Physical Therapy. In addition, the Board shall create The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice of Physical Therapists.

This measure will also institutionalize the Continuing Professional Education Program. It will also aim for the integration of physical therapists in the country through the formation of a national professional organization of physical therapists.

In view of foregoing, the early passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



AURELIO D. GONZALES, JR.
3rd District, Pampanga



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**AN ACT REGULATING THE REGISTRATION, LICENSURE, AND PRACTICE OF
PHYSICAL THERAPY, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER RELATED
PURPOSES**

Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

ARTICLE I. TITLE OF THE ACT AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

SECTION 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Philippine Physical Therapy Law."

SECTION 2. Definition of Terms. - As used in this Act, the following terms shall mean:

- a. **Physical Therapy** - is an allied medical profession which develops, coordinates and utilizes selected knowledge and skill in planning, organizing, directing and evaluating the programs for the care of individuals whose ability to function is impaired or threatened by disease or injury. Physical Therapy is the art and science of treatment by means of therapeutic exercises, heat, cold, light, water, manual manipulation, electricity and other physical agents. The goal of physical therapy is to help the patient reach maximum potential and to assume his due place in society while learning to live within limits of his capabilities. Physical Therapy requires in depth knowledge of human growth and development, human anatomy and physiology, neuroanatomy and neurophysiology, biomechanics of motion, manifestations of disease and trauma, normal and abnormal psychological responses to injury, sickness and disability, and the cultural socioeconomic influences of the individual.
- b. **Physical Therapist (PT)** - is a legally qualified professional licensed to practice physical therapy under the provisions of this Act. The Physical Therapist assists patients with temporary or permanent physical disability to achieve the highest possible degree of recovery.

ARTICLE II. THE BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

SECTION 3. Creation and Composition of the Board. - Within thirty (30) days upon the approval of this Act there shall be created the Board of Physical Therapy, hereinafter referred to as the Board, to be composed of a Chairman and two members who shall be appointed by the President of the

Philippines on the recommendation of the Professional Regulation Commission from among Physical Therapists recognized in the Philippines nominated by the accredited national organization of physical therapists.

SECTION 4. Powers and Functions of the Board. - Protection of the public shall be the highest priority for the Board in exercising its licensing, regulatory, and disciplinary functions. The Board is vested with authority conformably with the provisions of this Act to:

- a. Promulgate, administer, and enforce rules and regulations necessary for carrying out the provisions of this Act;
- b. Supervise and regulate the registration, licensure and practice of physical therapy in the Philippines;
- c. Administer oaths in connection with the administration of this Act;
- d. Adopt an official seal of the Board;
- e. Maintain a roster of physical therapists indicating therein the basic information about the registered professionals;
- f. Issue, reinstate, suspend, cancel or revoke the registration and license, or special permits for the practice of physical therapy;
- g. Study and monitor conditions affecting the practice of physical therapy and adopt such measures as may be deemed necessary for the enhancement of the profession and maintenance of high professional and ethical standards;
- h. Ensure, in collaboration with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) or its equivalent, that all educational institutions offering physical therapy education comply with the prescribed policies, standards, and guidelines;
- i. Prescribe the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for physical therapists endorsed by the accredited and integrated professional organization of physical therapists;
- j. Hear or investigate any violations of this Act, its implementing rules and regulations and the Code of Ethics, and for this purpose, issue subpoena duces tecum and/or ad testificandum to secure the appearance of witnesses and the production of documents in connection therewith: Provided, That the decision of the Board shall, unless appealed to the Commission, become final and executory after fifteen (15) days from receipt of judgment or decision;
- k. Prescribe guidelines and criteria in the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program for physical therapists;
- l. Prescribe the subjects in the licensure examination and table of specifications, determine the syllabi of the subjects and their relative weights, score and the rate examination papers, and submit the results to the Commission within the period provided for in the rules of the Commission;
- m. Administer the examinations to applicants for the practice of physical therapy in accordance with the provisions of this Act;
- n. Adopt a program for the full computerization of the licensure examination;
- o. Grant registration without examination subject to approval by the Commission;

- p. Issue special permits to persons admitted to the practice of physical therapy for a specific duration of time, and certificates of recognition for advanced studies, researches and accomplishments that contribute to the enrichment of the profession; and
- q. Perform such other powers and functions as deemed necessary to carry out the objectives of this Act.

The policies, resolutions, rules and regulations, orders or decisions issued or promulgated by the Board shall be subject to review and approval of the Commission.

SECTION 5. Qualifications of the Board Members. - The members of the Board shall at the time of their appointment be:

- a. A citizen of the Philippines and a resident thereof for at least five (5) years;
- b. A duly registered physical therapist in the Philippines with a valid certificate of registration and professional license;
- c. Has engaged in rendering physical therapy services for at least five (5) continuous years immediately preceding appointment;
- d. A member of good standing of the accredited and integrated professional organization of physical therapists, and not an officer thereof;
- e. Has no prior conviction by any competent court, of an offense involving moral turpitude;
- f. Has no pecuniary interest, directly or indirectly, in any school, college or university or institution conferring an academic degree necessary for admission to the practice of physical therapy; or where review classes in preparation for licensure examination are offered or conducted; nor be a member of the administration thereof; and
- g. Not a member of the faculty of any school, college or university where the regular course of his profession is being taught or review classes are conducted;

No member of the Board may accept employment or become connected with any school, college or university conferring a bachelor's degree in Physical Therapy for a period of one year after his term.

SECTION 6. Term of Office. - The members of the Board shall hold office for a term of three (3) years or until their successors have been appointed and duly qualified: Provided, That members of the first Board to be appointed after the approval of this Act shall hold office for the following terms: the chairperson for three (3) years, one (1) member for two (2) years, and the other member for one (1) year: Provided, further. That a chairperson or member may be reappointed for a second term, but may not serve more than two (2) consecutive three (3)-year terms or six (6) consecutive years. Interim vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired term only.

SECTION 7. Removal of Board Members. - Any member of the Board may, upon the recommendation of the Commission after due process of law and investigation conducted by the Commission, be suspended or removed by the President from office for cause such as gross neglect of duty, incompetence, malpractice, unprofessionalism, immorality, unethical or dishonorable conduct, final judgment of crimes involving moral turpitude, and manipulating or rigging of the licensure examination results, disclosure of secret and confidential information in the examination questions prior to the conduct of the said examination, or tampering of grades.

SECTION 8. Compensation and Allowances of the Board. – The chairperson and members of the Board shall receive compensation and allowances comparable to that being received by the chairpersons and members of existing regulatory boards under the Commission as provided for in the General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 9. Supervision of the Board, Custodian of Records, Secretariat, and Support Services. - The Board shall be under the administrative supervision of the Commission. All records of the Board, including applications for examination, examination papers and results, minutes of deliberation, administrative cases, and other investigations involving physical therapists, shall be kept by the Commission.

The Commission shall designate the Secretary of the Board and shall provide the secretariat and other support services to implement the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 10. Annual Report. - The Board shall, at the close of each calendar year, submit an annual report to the Commission, giving a detailed account of its proceedings and accomplishments during the year and recommending measures to be adopted, with the end in view of upgrading and improving the conditions affecting the practice of physical therapy in the Philippines.

ARTICLE III. LICENSURE EXAMINATION AND REGISTRATION

SECTION 11. Examination Required. - All applicants for registration for the practice of physical therapy shall be required to undergo a licensure examination to be given by the Board in such places and dates as the Commission may designate subject to compliance with the requirements prescribed by the Commission.

SECTION 12. Qualifications for Examination. - An applicant for the licensure examination for physical therapists shall establish, to the satisfaction of the Board, that the following qualifications are met:

- (a) A citizen of the Philippines or a foreigner whose country has a reciprocity agreement with the Philippines;
- (b) Has not been convicted of an offense involving moral turpitude; and
- (c) A graduate of a Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy degree or its equivalent degree as determined by the Board from a school, college or university in the Philippines or abroad whose physical therapy program is recognized by the CHED.

SECTION 13. Scope of Examination. - The licensure examination for physical therapists shall cover the basic sciences and health science foundations integrated into the following domains:

MEDICAL ASPECT

- A. Anatomy 1: Anatomy and Histology of the Back and Limbs
- B. Anatomy 2: Internal Organs, Face and Neuroanatomy
- C. Anatomy 3: Kinesiology and Biomechanics
- D. Physiology 2: General Physiology and Neurophysiology
- E. Pathology and Microbiology: General Pathology and General Microbiology
- F. Psychiatry: Psychological Reactions to Disability
- G. Orthotics and Prosthetics: Splinting, Casting Bandaging, Bracing, Artificial Limbs
- H. Medical/Surgical 1: General Medical Conditions and Pediatric Conditions
- I. Medical/Surgical 2: Neurological and Neurosurgical Conditions
- J. Medical/Surgical 3: Orthopedic and Surgical Conditions

PHYSICAL THERAPY ASPECT

- A. Therapeutic Exercise 1: Physiology of Exercise, Types and Posture
- B. Therapeutic Exercise 2: Specific Exercise; PRE's
- C. Therapeutic Exercise 3: Advanced Therapeutic Exercise, PNF
- D. PT 1: Hydrotherapy, Introduction to Patient Care, Massage and Superficial Heat

- E. PT 2: Electrotherapy
- F. PT 3: Principles of Evaluation; Techniques - ROM, MMT; History Taking and Charting
- G. Ethics in Physical Therapy
- H. Organization and Administration
- I. Seminar 1: Clinical Correlation, Team Approach
- J. Seminar 2; Clinical Correlation, Team Approach
- K. Clinical Education: Introduction to Clinics

The Board, subject to the approval by the Commission, may revise or exclude any of the subjects or add new ones as the need arises, and may adjust or modify the percentage weight of the subjects in order to keep the examination abreast and in conformity with the latest developments in the profession here and abroad.

SECTION 14. Ratings in the Examination. - To be qualified as having passed the licensure examination for physical therapists, a candidate must have obtained a general average of seventy-five percent (75%), with no grade lower than sixty percent (60%) in any given subject.

SECTION 15. Report of Ratings. - The Board shall submit to the Commission the ratings obtained by each candidate within ten (10) calendar days after the examination, unless extended for just cause.

SECTION 16. Issuance of the Certificate of Registration, Professional License, and Professional Identification Card. - Registration and a professional license shall be issued to examinees who pass the licensure examination for physical therapists subject to payment of fees prescribed by the Commission. The registration and professional license shall bear the signature of the chairperson of the Commission and the members of the Board, stamped with the official seal, indicating that the person named therein is entitled to practice the profession with all the privileges appurtenant thereto. The registration and license shall remain in full force and effect until revoked or suspended in accordance with this Act.

SECTION 17. Initial. - The initials "PTRP", which stands for Physical Therapists Registered Philippines, shall be used following the name of the registered physical therapist, especially when signing documents pertinent to the practice of the profession.

SECTION 18. Refusal to Register. - The Board shall refuse to register any successful examinee who has been convicted by a court of competent jurisdiction of any criminal offense involving moral turpitude, or has been found guilty of immoral or dishonorable conduct after investigation by the Board, or has been declared to be of unsound mind. The reason for the refusal shall be set forth in writing.

SECTION 19. Reinstatement, Re-issuance or Replacement of Certificate of Registration and Professional License. - Two (2) years after the date of revocation, the Board may, upon application and for reasons deemed proper and sufficient, reinstate any revoked certificate of registration or professional license, and in so doing, may, in its discretion, exempt the applicant from taking another examination.

A new certificate of registration, professional license, or special permit, to replace lost, destroyed, or mutilated ones, may be issued subject to the rules as implemented by the Board.

SECTION 20. Oath of Physical Therapists. - Successful examinees qualified for registration, and qualified applicants for registration without examination, shall be required to take an oath of profession before any member of the Board or any government official authorized by the Commission to administer oaths, prior to entering into the practice of physical therapy in the Philippines.

SECTION 21. Indication of Licensure and Privilege Tax Receipt. - The physical therapist shall be required to indicate his/her registration/professional license number and date of issuance thereof,

the duration of validity of said license, including his/her privilege tax receipt number, on the documents he/she signs, uses or issues in connection with the practice of his/her profession.

SECTION 22. Revocation or Suspension of the Certificate of Registration and Cancellation of Special Permit. – The Board may, after giving proper notice of hearing to the party concerned, revoke the practitioner's certificate of registration and professional license, or be suspended from the practice of the profession; or cancel the special permit for any of the causes or grounds mentioned in Section 25 of this Act or for any unprofessional or unethical conduct, malpractice, violation of any of the provisions of this Act, its rules and regulations, the Code of Ethics, and Standards of Practice for physical therapists.

SECTION 23. Roster of Physical Therapists. - The Board shall prepare, update and maintain a roster of physical therapists which shall contain the name of each registered physical therapist, his/her residence and office addresses, the date of registration and issuance of certificates, and other data which the Board may deem pertinent. The roster shall be open to the public, copies of which shall be mailed to each person listed therein.

SECTION 24. Issuance of Special and Temporary Permit. - Special or temporary permits upon recommendation of the integrated professional organization of physical therapists may be issued by the Board, subject to the approval by the Commission and payment of the fees the latter has prescribed and charges, to the following persons:

- (a) Foreign-licensed physical therapists called for consultation or a specified purpose that is deemed essential to national development: Provided, That the practice shall be limited only for the particular work being engaged: Provided, further, That there is no Filipino therapist qualified for such consultation or purpose;
- (b) Foreign-licensed physical therapists whose service shall be free and who are highly needed under particular settings;
- (c) Foreign-licensed physical therapists engaged as professors, lecturers, or critics in fields essential to physical therapy education in the Philippines, whose engagement is limited to teaching only; and
- (d) Foreign-licensed physical therapist recognized as an expert or specialist whose service is deemed essential to the advancement of the profession in the Philippines.

The permit shall, among other things, include these limitations and conditions: valid only for a period of not more than one (1) year subject to renewal; the branch or specialty of physical therapy which the permit holder can practice; and the specific place or places of practice such as clinic, hospital, center, school/college/university offering the course of physical therapy. The Board, subject to the approval by the Commission, shall prescribe rules and regulations for the implementation of this particular section.

ARTICLE IV. PRACTICE OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

SECTION 25. Prohibition on the Practice of Physical Therapy. – No person shall practice or offer to practice physical therapy, nor offer to be a physical therapist, or use the title, word, letter, figure, or any sign tending to convey the impression of being a physical therapist, nor advertise or indicate in any manner whatsoever to be qualified to perform the work of a physical therapist without passing the licensure examination given by the Board, except as otherwise provided in this Act.

SECTION 26. Prohibited Acts. - No person shall:

- a. Engage in the practice of physical therapy by representing himself/herself as a physical therapist without a valid registration, professional license, or a valid temporary/special permit granted by the Board pursuant to this Act;

- b. Represent to be a physical therapist during the time that his/her professional license is not valid or that his/her certificate of registration has been suspended or revoked, or that his/her temporary/special permit has been cancelled;
- c. Allow anybody to use his/her certificate of registration and/or professional license and/or temporary/special permit as a physical therapist to enable such unqualified individual to engage in the practice of physical therapy;
- d. Use as his/her own the certificate of registration, professional license, or temporary/special permit of another person; and
- e. Violate any provision of the Code of Ethics as recommended by the accredited national organization of physical therapists.

SECTION 27. Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Physical Therapists. - The Board shall adopt and promulgate the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for physical therapists prescribed and issued by the Accredited and Integrated Professional Organization (AIPO) of physical therapists.

SECTION 28. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Program. - All physical therapists shall abide with the requirements, rules and regulations on continuing professional development to be promulgated by the Professional Regulatory Board of Physical Therapy, subject to the approval of the Commission, in coordination with the AIPO of physical therapists and/or the recognized representative of duly accredited education institutions. For this purpose, the Board may create a CPD council to implement the CPD program, subject to such guidelines as may be prescribed by the Commission.

SECTION 29. Integration of Physical Therapists. - The physical therapy profession shall be integrated into one (1) national professional organization of physical therapists, which shall be duly registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). The Board, subject to approval by the Commission, shall accredit the said organization as the one and only AIPO of registered physical therapists. All physical therapists whose names appear in the current Registry Book of Physical Therapists shall ipso facto or automatically become members thereof and shall receive all the benefits and privileges appurtenant thereto upon payment of the required AIPO membership fees and dues.

Membership in the AIPO shall not be a bar to membership in other organizations of physical therapists.

SECTION 30. Foreign Reciprocity. – No foreigner shall be admitted to the licensure examination or be given a certificate of registration and professional identification card, or be entitled to any of the rights and privileges under this Act, unless the requirements for the registration or licensing in aid foreign country or state are substantially the same as those required and contemplated by the laws of the Philippines, and that the laws of such foreign country or state specifically permits Filipino physical therapists to practice within its territorial limits on the same basis as the subjects or citizens of such foreign country or State.

ARTICLE V. PENAL AND MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

SECTION 31. Penal Provisions. - Any person who shall violate any of the provisions of this Act or any of its implementing rules and regulations as promulgated by the Board, subject to the approval of the Commission, shall upon conviction, be punished with a fine of not less than Twenty thousand pesos (P20,000.00) nor more than Fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00), or by imprisonment of not less than two (2) years nor more than five (5) years, or both, at the discretion of the court.

SECTION 32. Funding Provision. - The Chairman of the Commission shall immediately include in the Commission's budget program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 33. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - To implement the provisions of this Act, the Board shall, subject to the approval of the Commission, promulgate the rules and regulations, as well as the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for physical therapists, within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act.

SECTION 34. Transitory Provisions. - The existing Board of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy shall continue to function in the interim until such time that the new and separate Professional Regulatory Board of Physical Therapy shall be constituted pursuant to this Act.

Any person holding a license to practice physical therapy issued by the Board of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy, which license is valid when this Act takes effect, shall be deemed to be licensed as a physical therapist.

SECTION 35. Separability Clause. - If any part, portion, section or provision of this Act shall be declared invalid or unconstitutional, such shall not invalidate any other part, portion, section or provision of this Act and the same shall continue to be in force and effect.

SECTION 36. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, orders, issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby modified, revised, superseded or repealed.

SECTION 37. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) major newspapers of national circulation, whichever comes earlier.

Approved,