

- SUBJECT:** Renewal fees and procedures for physical therapist license
- COMMITTEE:** Public Health — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 6 ayes — Kolkhorst, Naishtat, Coleman, V. Gonzales, S. King, Laubenberg
- 3 nays — S. Davis, Schwertner, Zerwas
- 2 absent — Alvarado, Truitt
- WITNESSES:** For — Paul Hardin, Texas Physical Therapy Association
- Against — None
- On — Nina Hurter, Texas Board of Physical Therapist Examiners
- BACKGROUND:** Occupations Code, sec. 453.252 stipulates that physical therapists can renew an unexpired license by paying the renewal fee to the Executive Council of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Examiners. If the license is expired for less than 90 days, they can renew by paying the renewal fee plus half the cost for the examination of the license. If the license is expired for more than 90 days but less than one year, they can renew by paying the renewal fee plus the cost for the examination of the license. If the license is expired for more than a year, they may not renew the license, but may submit an application for a new license.
- Occupations Code, sec. 453.253 stipulates that the Texas Board of Physical Therapy Examiners can renew a license for a physical therapist in Texas who moves out of state and has been practicing in that state for the previous two years. The physical therapist has to pay the cost for the examination of the license.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 3370 would allow a physical therapist to renew a license that had been expired for less than 90 days by paying the renewal fee plus a late fee that could not exceed more than half the cost for the examination of the license. If the license was expired for more than 90 days but less than one year, they could renew by paying the renewal fee plus a late fee not more than the cost for the examination of the license. If the license was expired

for more than a year, the physical therapist would have to undergo a reinstatement process and pay a fee. If they were unable to comply with these requirements, they could submit an application for a new license.

The bill also would allow the Texas Board of Physical Therapy Examiners to renew an expired license for a physical therapist who moved out of state if he or she was in good standing in the other state and met the Texas Board of Physical Therapy Examiners' renewal requirements. The physical therapist would have to pay a fee not more than the cost for the examination of the license.

As soon as possible after the effective date of the bill, the Texas Board of Physical Therapy Examiners and Executive Council of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Examiners would be required to set rules and fees necessary to implement the bill's provisions.

The bill would apply only to license renewals on or after the effective date of the bill. The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2011.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

Current law forces veteran physical therapists to reapply for a license as if they were brand new to the field, even when they have practiced as licensed physical therapists in Texas as early as one year previously. This is a time-consuming and burdensome constraint for experienced practitioners, including out-of-state licensed and practicing physical therapists wishing to return to Texas. CSHB 3370 would alleviate this burden while still requiring physical therapists to undergo a more reasonable reinstatement process as determined by the Texas Board of Physical Therapy Examiners.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

Physical therapists, like other medical professionals, should be held to certain high standards for obtaining their licenses. Lowering these standards for physical therapists who have been unlicensed for over a year would set a dangerous precedent in the medical profession and could cause further injury to patients.