

AMERICAN PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION
1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.

MEMO To: Chapter Presidents,
District Chairmen, and
Legislative Chairmen

Date: January, 1961

Re: 1961 Legislative Activity

From: Dorothy E. Voss
Staff Liaison
Legislative Program

Within the coming months our Chapters' efforts to have physical therapy practice acts enacted and existing laws amended will be intensified. We are concerned about each chapter where our members are so engaged and also are concerned about certain non-physical therapist, non-medical groups who are becoming increasingly active in many parts of the country. This memo, therefore, has a three-fold purpose: 1) to inform you of other chapters' activity; 2) to ask that you keep us informed of your activity and to seek guidance; and 3) to alert you on activities of "fringe" groups.

Summary of Anticipated Activity in 1961

Note: If your Chapter expects to secure introduction of a bill in 1961, whether it is for an initial law, or amendments to an existing law, and if no information about your Chapter follows here, please bring us up-to-date immediately. Let us know, too, from what groups you expect opposition.

Based on information on hand, December 15, the following chapters may have bills introduced in 1961. The picture is not clear, in some instances, but we hope that all will be able to proceed.

Initial Laws

Alabama	Michigan
District of Columbia	Missouri
Idaho	Rhode Island
Kansas	West Virginia
	Wyoming

Amendments to Existing Laws

Alaska	New Hampshire
Georgia	Oklahoma
Maryland	Washington

Some chapters, including New York Chapter, may support bills which are in keeping with our goals.

The following chapters are delaying because of lack of Medical Society support: Iowa, Mississippi, and Texas.

We suspect that other chapters (Louisiana, and Montana) may be delaying for the same reason. We will appreciate hearing from these chapters, also Puerto Rico Chapter

All in all, it seems that at least 15 chapters may be supporting their own bills.

Be Alert for Independent Practitioners:

"Six states have specific laws regulating the practice of massage or mechanotherapy." "Absent from all massage practice acts is any requirement that licentiates must practice only under the direction, supervision, and control of a physician." The foregoing sentences are from the Final Report of "The Committee to Study the Relationships of Medicine with Allied Health Professions and Services" adopted by the AMA House of Delegates, June 16, 1960. (See our memo dated July 25 for other information about this report.) The six states having massage laws are Arkansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oregon, and Hawaii. The staff of the AMA's Law Division has analyzed these laws, and finds that none of the six "requires supervision" of licentiates and that none "prohibits the practice of medicine." These laws seem inadequate to the protection of patients because they license "independent practitioners." Enactment of laws of this kind in other states is not in the best interest of the public.

In 1959 a bill of this nature passed one branch of the legislature in Pennsylvania, was actively opposed in the second branch by physicians and physical therapists, and was defeated in the second branch of the legislature. The group which sponsored the Pennsylvania bill and similar groups have become increasingly active in many states. Recently we have received queries and evidence of activity in Alabama, California, Kansas, and Oklahoma.

Every Chapter and District should be watchful of these groups. If a bill is introduced, it should be opposed. Your State Medical Society, State Board of Medical Examiners, and State Hospital Association should be contacted and informed that physical therapists are opposed to such legislation. Physical therapists should register opposition through their chapter rather than rely upon other groups to do this job for them.

If you obtain literature distributed by "fringe" groups, please send us copies in order that we may more fully inform others when queries come to this office.