

TESTIMONY OF EILEEN LEVIS

ON BEHALF OF THE PENNSYLVANIA ORTHOTICS AND PROSTHETICS SOCIETY (POPS)

BEFORE THE HOUSE PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE COMMITTEE REGARDING HB 2015 AND THE NEED FOR LICENSURE OF THE O & P PROFESSION

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 2008
418 Main Capitol Building

Good morning Chairman Sturla and members of the Committee. My name is Eileen Levis and I am President of the Pennsylvania Orthotic and Prosthetic Society and currently serve as managing partner and President of Orthologix, a Philadelphia based Orthotics and Prosthetics practice. With over 25 years working in the orthotics and prosthetics industry here in Pennsylvania, my experience ranges from regulatory and fiscal affairs to process development and implementation. I sit on the Medicare PROVIDER Outreach and Education Advisory Board and have successfully managed the reorganization of the Milton S. Hershey Medical Center Orthotic and Prosthetic Department.

I would like to thank you for allowing me and my colleagues to present our opinions on House Bill 2015 and on the issue of licensure for orthotists and prosthetists practicing in the state of Pennsylvania. I will be brief in my comments today, but this issue regarding licensure of orthotists, prosthetists, and pedorthists is extremely important to the citizens of this state who require our expert care. Across the county, licensure for providers of orthotics and prosthetics has been progressing over the past few years. Currently the states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, New Jersey, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, and Washington have all established licensure for orthotists, prosthetists, with other states currently in the process. Licensure establishes a level of qualifying for those who are providing healthcare services. The outcome of unregulated healthcare services such as these may be starkly evident but many times may not be directly apparent. Over time inappropriate components or lack of knowledge of a patient's all-over-health status can result in added medical expenses, poor outcomes, health complications, and even death. Essentially at present, in the state of PA you are more accountable if you are a hairdresser than a healthcare professional providing orthotic and prosthetic services.

Organizations throughout the healthcare community strongly support licensure for Orthotists and Prosthetists. Among those are the American Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists and the Amputee Collation of America.

✓ In closing, I would just like to say that licensure is for the protection of the people, the very people who live and work here in the Commonwealth. One day that need could be yours, a family member or friend. **Are you comfortable with the knowledge that you might get a better haircut than a prosthesis?** I leave you with that thought as you will hear testimony today from my colleagues who will cover all areas of this issue. You will hear how orthotic and prosthetic services and technology have advanced in the past 30 years, how this technology is enabling our service men and women to regain their lives, how other states have managed to license O & P providers, how detailed and advanced O & P education has become, evidence of incidents of fraud and abuse which will demonstrate how licensure will help protect Pennsylvanians in your district and give them the quality, professional care they deserve.

Thank you Mr. Chairman and I turn over the next part of our testimony to Mr. Tom Been, CEO of Central Orthotics and Prosthetics.