

Georgia Occupational Regulation Review Council (GORRC)

08/23/2019

Georgia State Capitol, Room 450, 11am-12pm

Meeting Minutes

I. Attendees

GORRC Members	Other Attendees and Affiliation
Anna Wrigley Miller, Chair, Governor's Office of Planning and Budget	Advocates:
Absent: Chairman Chuck Hufstetler, Senate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Brent Wolfe• Briana Panosian• Kevin Enright• Raven Allen• Kim Way• Kasey Lawton
Chairman Alan Powell, House of Representatives	OPB Staff:
Kelly Dudley, State Accounting Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cody Pyle
Jonna West, Department of Agriculture	
Brent Vendola, Department of Natural Resources	
Jessica Simmons, Department of Revenue	
Gabriel Sterling, Secretary of State	
Christina Ferguson, Department of Public Health	

II. Explanation of GORRC's Purpose and Process:

- a. The purpose of the first meeting is to introduce the legislation
- b. At the second meeting staff will present findings, including background, other states' practices, complaint data and other findings. Additionally, the Council will hear public testimony regarding the proposed legislation.
- c. The third meeting will call on Council to make a recommendation on whether regulation of the occupation is needed, and if so, to recommend the most appropriate and least restrictive way to implement the legislation. By law, the Council considers the following factors when determining whether or not a profession or business should be regulated:
 - i. Whether the unregulated practice of the occupation may harm or endanger the health, safety, and welfare of citizens of this state and whether the potential for harm is recognizable and not remote;
 - ii. Whether the practice of the occupation requires specialized skill or training and whether the public needs and will benefit by assurances of initial and continuing occupational ability;

- iii. Whether the citizens of this state are or may be effectively protected by other means;
- iv. Whether the overall cost effectiveness and economic impact would be positive for citizens of this state; and
- v. Whether there are means other than state regulation to protect the interests of the state.

III. Speakers (Testimony)

Anna Wrigley Miller, Office of Planning and Budget:

So, basically how I want to start today is just going over the meeting from last week. Basically, what we did was... I sent out the minutes to everybody very early this morning because I thought I had sent them on Wednesday, but anyways. So, the last meeting we had an introduction from Dr. Wolfe about the profession, what the potential causes of harm were just anecdotally, and just kind of learned a little about what other states were doing and kind of summed up that there were four other states who have specific boards. So, kind of the takeaways that we were going to present today are specific cases of harm that doctor Wolfe sent everybody. I provided you guys that, and he's going to kind of go over them with us. I asked Secretary of State's office to put together some cost estimates for us for what a new board would cost. So, Gabe [Gabriel Sterling] it is going to very nicely go over that with us today. And then, I have a draft report that we have put together. No findings are in it yet, or no other recommendations, but after we kind of go through those things, we'll just talk about the report and kind of where we're going, and we'll kind of end the meeting today, after some public comment, with how we're going to approach writing the draft report. I do want to point out to everybody that our next meeting is September fifth (5th), and the meeting room has changed. So, we are not going to be up here. We are going to be in room one twenty-five (125) here. So, it's going down on the first floor instead of up on the fourth floor.

I'd like to start with Dr. Wolfe talking about the cases of harm. And for you guys up here, they look like these two pieces of paper.

Gabriel Sterling, Secretary of State's Office:

Madam Chair, have we accepted the minutes? Madam Chair, I make a motion to accept the minutes from the eight (8)/thirteen (13)/nineteen (19) meeting of GORRC.

Anna Wrigley Miller, Office of Planning and Budget:

Second?

Multiple seconds were offered

Anna Wrigley Miller, Office of Planning and Budget:

Great. Now we will move on.

Dr. Brent D. Wolfe, PhD, CTRS, FDRT:

Fantastic. Thank y'all for having us back. We are grateful to be here, to be able to talk some more about this... this bill we're trying to work on. So, in relation to the cases of harm, and just kind of the process of what we did since our last meeting, we reach out to several folks, kind of across the country, states that do have licensure where they're tracking cases of harm. In addition, we put out a call across the state of Georgia, through the Georgia Therapeutic Recreation Association, trying to identify and ask people to share with us cases where those... where things that happened within the... within the field. And so, what you've got in front of you there, a couple different documents. One is just kind of a numbered list of cases of harm, and then the state of New Hampshire actually, there were three attachments, and I don't know if those ended up coming through or not.

Anna Wrigley Miller, Office of Planning and Budget:

They are very long. I didn't want to print.

Dr. Brent D. Wolfe, PhD, CTRS, FDRT:

That that that's fine, and I, you know, I can summarize it. They're...they're similar to some of these other things, but there are cases where folks have practiced without a license and that's... it's gone before the board and those types of things anyway. So, but we can focus today kind of on the ones that are in front of us here. You know, in... in North Carolina, and again as it is it relates to I guess saving Georgians money, the first one there is an important one for us to consider because when they had somebody who was not licensed sign off on a student doing an internship that student's internship did not count, and as a result, the student had to pay additional tuition and fees to be able to do another semester to get their internship. And so, there's a clear case of how it's not necessarily quite that type of harm that were typically thinking about but it's certainly how this can have an impact.

There are cases in North Carolina, and we also see cases in Georgia, of individuals who have been under the influence, and in North Carolina, it's somebody who was licensed being under the influence while they were actually at work and practicing. Right now, in the state of Georgia, we don't necessarily have a means to address that, a means to kind of work through situations and

issues like that. Issues with... folks, again North Carolina, using racially demeaning terms, and those are... these are individuals who are licensed. And with the license, there is a means of recourse in those situations, and right now we don't... we don't have that means of recourse. I think one of the, you know... another alcohol case, positive drug test, number six (6) on that list from North Carolina, the... taking somebody who was suicidal to a gym, and then allowing that person to work out while the individual left that person there with access to all sorts of different things, pieces of equipment, that they could use to commit suicide, and so that becomes an issue when we're talking about how we protect the public. And this is something that recreational therapists do, and they should know that that is not an acceptable way of trying to care for patients and care for clients.

So, some of the interesting ones that come out within the state of Georgia, and this is... we've gotten some... some interesting cases, and again these are... when we look at these cases these are not things that I would say are abnormal. This is the evidence that we have in front of us. And so, we have a case of somebody who was doing their internship, and the... and there was a person who was working there who was not a rec therapist, but saying that they were doing recreational therapy who took individuals with anxiety disorders to a music festival, here in Atlanta, where promptly somebody had an anxiety attack. That shouldn't happen. And it's because somebody is calling themselves a rec therapist without the training, without the credentials to do what we are doing. What we're supposed to do. In the same way, you have somebody who is working in an inpatient psychiatric facility, where they say that they're providing recreational therapy services to folks, but the person who is providing the services isn't qualified, isn't trained, and so now, you have somebody paying for services that they're not actually receiving. What they're getting is simply killing time, and if I can phrase it this way: babysitting. As opposed to somebody who's providing treatment for them, and that's what the patient's paying for. The patient's paying for somebody to provide them treatment, and that's not what they're receiving.

So, that's the second example that's on there from the Georgia list. We look at that third (3rd) example, and that third example really goes into another non-credentialed individual who's trying to... I will say trying to assess the clients that are there. Trying to develop a plan, trying to put that plan into action, but they don't have the credentials to do this. So, why should they be saying that they're a recreational therapist doing this when they don't have the skills, or the abilities, to do it? They have no training in this, and so that's another case that we have seen where that has happened and what that is kind of... and I think we see that more often than not here in Georgia where that's going on because again about a third of our people who are practicing recreational therapist here in Georgia are not credentialed in any way. We look, you know, this kind of carries over number four (4) on that list is folks who are not trained, and this matches up to the taking folks to the music festival. If I'm not trained in any way, shape, or form in recreational therapy, or how to care for individuals, and I take them on outings into the public, all of a sudden I have opened up not just that individual

for harm but also the public for harm because now we've created the potential for a very bad situation to occur, if we take folks with mental illnesses out into the community, which is absolutely what we do and what we should be doing, but we don't have people who are credentialed to do that, we're going to run into problems.

And that is exactly what number four (4) is referencing, an individual that had seen that. Number five (5) on this list is a... it's a credentialed individual, somebody who is a certified therapeutic recreation specialist, who regularly carries a knife in a backpack into their locked unit on a psychiatric hospital here in the state of Georgia. That's a problem, and that is something that this law would help to protect because we could address these types of issues in a better way than what we're doing right now. There should not be any reason why that is occurring. In the case of this individual it's because the individual uses... has that because of... personal safety is the rationale that is given. That's not a good rationale. So, that's when we talk to folks that are here in the state that we got some of those things.

I want to skip, and I'll come back to the last parts on there, but I want to skip to some things that came out between the time that I sent this to you guys and today. I had a chance to have a conversation with a colleague regarding an individual who worked at a hospital where they do outdoor experiences for their patients for their clients. This individual, the outdoor person, who was a recreational therapist, also he taught individuals how to use guns, and the idea, how do we do this safety... safely, how do we take people out and give them these experiences? This individual comes to work under the influence. This is a person with access to the guns in the facility and is teaching people how to use them coming to work under the influence. Again, another case where we start to look at potential, significant potential for harm.

Another case we had an individual who, actually this happened... I was told this yesterday. I had a student come up to me who had done some work over the summer... trying to get some experience in recreational therapy, working under a certified therapeutic recreation specialist. The student came up to me and was very distraught about the experiences that they've had. And I said, 'well tell me what happened,' and the student said that when they were out, and when they were in the facility, in different places, they're working with children with severe autism. And in order to address the aggressive and negative behaviors from children with severe autism the C. T. R. S. would pinch the children to get them to stop doing what they were doing. The C.T.R.S. would also mimic the behaviors of what the children were doing to mock them. This was happening in public, and the phrase used over and over again was, "they're nonverbal, so they cannot tell their parents." As recreational therapists, we work with the most vulnerable, and we need to protect them, and that is absolutely not happening in that particular example. And that's one of the reasons why we want this law.

We also have a different type of issue that goes on when it comes to potential harm. We discovered a website, that is advertising and promoting recreational therapy services. It's for an adaptive golfing operation, and they are

promoting the use of therapeutic recreation, recreational therapy, and they talk about all the individuals that they serve. Individuals who are veterans with PTSD, individuals with autism, individuals with severe physical impairments. Teaching them how to golf. No individual associated with that organization is credential in any way, shape, or form for therapeutic recreation, but they claim that that is what they're doing all over their website. I'm not a dentist. I cannot come to you guys and say that I am a dentist. But people claim that they're recreational therapist all the time without the training, without the background, without the credentials. And that is what we need to do to continue to try to protect so that when Georgians go to an adaptive goal facility that they are getting the best training, the best possible training that they can receive because it's by somebody who is credentialed. It is by somebody who has the training, who has the background to provide these services, and that is what we need to try and do.

The last piece that's on this sheet here is when we had our state conference last year in two thousand eighteen (2018), we got folks into focus groups, and we wanted to identify, have them identify some cases of harm... things that had occurred. Again, without a formal process of tracking, this is difficult information to try and come across, but we use this so that we could try to identify some of these things. And so, what we see is some similarities to the concrete examples that I just provided you all with. With credentialed individuals who are not doing what they're supposed to be doing, with non-credentialed individuals who say that they're doing rec therapy, but they have no background in recreational therapy. So, we see a lot of these same types of... same types of things. I think one of the largest issues that we also see is, again, noncredentialed individuals saying that they're providing recreational therapy services without the training, without the background in which to be able to make those types of claims.

So, that at least kind of walks us through some of these. Happy to field any questions or concerns that the committee might have.

Gabriel Sterling, Secretary of State's Office:

A couple of your examples, like the guy coming in with a knife. Is that a question of hospital administration more than anything? It should be a rule to be employed you shouldn't be able to carry weapons. You wouldn't be employed anymore.

Dr. Brent D. Wolfe, PhD, CTRS, FDRT:

I would absolutely agree with you, and that should be that that certainly could be addressed by the hospital administration. There's no reason why that couldn't be, if it doesn't, you know, if it doesn't come out. That would be one way to address that, but that individual could then leave that facility, and I will tell you that in this case this individual, this is not their first facility that they have been at.

They have been at a different facility within the state of Georgia. They... they were asked to leave, but again, without licensure there's no way to track that. And so now that individual continues to practice and continues to do issues related to harm.

Gabriel Sterling, Secretary of State's Office:

And on the same thing, and I guess the under the influence employee could get fired because, obviously, you don't come to work drunk.

Dr. Brent D. Wolfe, PhD, CTRS, FDRT:

Correct, yes yeah, you'd like the think so.

Gabriel Sterling, Secretary of State's Office:

He gets fired, and then says I'm a certified recreational therapist and goes somewhere else.

Dr. Brent D. Wolfe, PhD, CTRS, FDRT:

Exactly correct.

Gabriel Sterling, Secretary of State's Office:

But again, does that fall back on the whoever's hiring him to not have done an appropriate background check or to talk to the other employers?

Dr. Brent D. Wolfe, PhD, CTRS, FDRT:

We can help and assist if we tracked it through a licensure process because then we also have an additional fail safe in that process to ensure that these types of things don't slip through the cracks.

Gabriel Sterling, Secretary of State's Office:

Alright, thank you.

Anna Wrigley Miller, Office of Planning and Budget:

Thank you. The second thing I would like to go through is... we asked the Secretary of State's office to kind of provide a cost list of what a new board would

be like. We went a step further, if you go through the second page of this, about what a sublicense or certification registration would be.

Gabriel Sterling, Secretary of State's Office:

Is this on?

Anna Wrigley Miller, Office of Planning and Budget:

Yeah.

Gabriel Sterling, Secretary of State's Office:

It's never an easy thing to establish an entire new board or division for... for any particular occupation, and we don't consider these to be all inclusive, but these are the basic cost numbers. Jessica [Jessica Simmons] probably remembers seeing some of these before from her previous life. We've stood up a couple of things in the last few years. That's what we're basing a lot of this on. And a lot of those things we don't really think about, but I'll go through the different cost lines on these. For entire board, you're gonna need an executive director, and while the salary is a decent sixty-four thousand (\$64,000), with the state burden costs attached to that to employ an executive director is a hundred and four thousand three hundred twenty dollars (\$104,320). It's not inexpensive, and this is through for all the employees.

So, what we did is we broke it down to continuing costs and then startup costs. So, on the continuing cost side, we're looking at a licensing supervisor, board supports, which is a split cost of existing administrative staff, a licensing analyst, a compliance analyst, simple thing like a wall certificate two-hundred and fifty bucks (\$250), but it's part of the costs. Board member per diem, this is a spitball, ten grand (\$10,000). Intake support, we would have to have people dealing with anything that comes in, so we used .4 for an F.T.E. [Full-Time Employee] for that. Call center support, similarly, .4 of an F.T.E. for that. Inspector support, investigation support, a half (.5) an F.T.E. each.

Attorney General fees, when things have to be referred, examination and training. Their shared server costs for hosting all the I. T. support and OSAH hearings, because, obviously, these things have to be handled administratively. And that totals out to building a board of four hundred and thirty-one thousand nine-hundred-ninety-two dollars (\$431,992.00), and that doesn't include some other costs. The I. T., the computers, you know, the extra certifications for our inspectors and investigators. So, these were again put together over a few days by our staff, between our IT staff and our PLB staff down in Macon.

Now, the startup costs associated with this, and again we didn't shoot high and we didn't shoot low, we shot sort of in the middle. I.T. staff work with assistance of about twenty-five thousand (\$25,000). Automation through SA software contractor we have is seventy-five thousand (\$75,000). The software and website that's public facing that anybody who's getting license would have to go through another twelve thousand (\$12,000) or so, and rulemaking with the

AG's office. We have to start with an entire new set of rules, as opposed to existing ones, but twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000). So, it was about a hundred thirty thousand (\$132,000). So all in, we're looking at five hundred sixty-three thousand, nine hundred and ninety-two dollars (\$563,992) to establish a full board. Estimated. So, in real life we're probably closer to six twenty (\$620,000) for all the things we're not thinking about. So, it's in that range.

Now, from discussions, we decided to go-ahead see what would it cost, we've done this before in nursing where we've had certificates and licensed things inside an existing board, and what's the cost with that. There are still cost associated with on the ongoing and the startup side, but they are obviously lower.

For that one, we're looking at, on the continuing cost side: a licensing analyst, you still have to have the compliance analyst, a wall certificate, and the intake/call center supports are the same. Inspector/investigation supports are the same. Attorney General fees would be the same. Examinations and training would be the same. The shared server costs would be a little bit less because that's fewer employees. We divided it up by employee, and the OSAH hearings would be the same. So the total cost on that is around two hundred twenty one thousand five hundred and two (\$221,502) for the continuing cost versus four hundred and thirty one thousand nine ninety two (\$431,992).

And then the startup costs are lower because there's less software integration you have to do, you know, you don't have to start from scratch on some of these. So, the I.T. staff is still gonna be twenty five thousand (\$25,000), but the software contractor automation is only thirty thousand (\$30,000), and the outward facing website would just be part of an existing one, so you use all the same systems, about six thousand(\$6,000), and the rulemaking would be less because we'd be doing additional rules on a set of rules that are already there as our baseline, so five thousand (\$5,000). So, sixty-six thousand (\$66,000) for the startup. For a total of two-eighty-seven five-[zero]-two (\$287,502). And again, maybe [the difference is \$276,490 for year-one (1) costs] or so. So, it's about half the cost, and the continuing costs stay about two hundred and ten thousand (\$210,000) dollars less every year.

Anna Wrigley Miller, Office of Planning and Budget:

Would you also go in and explain a little bit what registration would mean, kind of as it would look? Define kind of what that means.

Gabriel Sterling, Secretary of State's Office:

A registration, certificate, or sublicense would have to be established under a law, obviously, and it would be essentially, and again, this is just from internal discussions, you have an occupational therapy license, but you'd have a specialty in recreational therapy, along those lines, and you'd be defined by rules. We work with the stake holders on what those would be, the certifications and

the check throughs. And that way, we would use existing infrastructure, but they would have... have an occupational therapy license with a recreational therapy specialization, or something like that, so that we can use the existing infrastructures that we have that would still allow for a lot of the same positives we could get from having a separate board by itself. That's sort of the intent with that. There are some... some slips in the law, we talked about before, on late renewals and renewal specification, where it falls to division directors. From our side, we much prefer having it fall through the discretion of the division directors. It makes our lives a lot easier than having to try to navigate laws sometimes causes there's unintended consequences on those.

But that's the basis of how you do it. You'd have an annual renewal, the same kind of way. You could establish C.E. hours. You can still have the same, you know, tracking of it, of problem children, a lot of the same situations and... and meet the same goals your trying to meet without having to have the additional expensive of an entire board. And potentially, a thought process is to have, on the occupation therapy board, add a person who is a recreational therapist or have one of those spots go to recreational therapist, so they have a voice in decision-making matters along that front.

Anna Wrigley Miller, Office of Planning and Budget:

Any questions to Gabriel?

Chairman Alan Powell, Georgia State House of Representatives:

I do, but I'm sitting here trying to think how I want to frame this question. You talked about the sub licensing, actually putting it under the board of physical therapy? Occupational therapy?

Gabriel Sterling, Secretary of State's Office:

Occupational therapy. And again, that's just an idea that we're not wedded to. Whatever works best, but that seems to be the one that fits the most.

Chairman Alan Powell, Georgia State House of Representatives:

And then I'm looking at, and I see the price on this. How many, it escapes me, but how many licensees are we speaking of that would be licensed?

Dr. Brent D. Wolfe, PhD, CTRS, FDRT:

Four hundred, I think.

Chairman Alan Powell, Georgia State House of Representatives:

Have you done the math to see what you'd get in a license fee?

Gabriel Sterling, Secretary of State's Office:

To cover the actual costs?

Anna Wrigley Miller, Office of Planning and Budget:

It'd be about forty thousand dollars (\$40,000). It is about a hundred dollars (\$100) per license is what is talked about since nothing is written in the bill, so about forty thousand dollars (\$40,000) that would be coming in.

Gabriel Sterling, Secretary of State's Office:

It's not gonna be a one for one trade, but I can't tell you that without having to go put pen to paper.

Chairman Alan Powell, Georgia State House of Representatives:

Okay.

Anna Wrigley Miller, Office of Planning and Budget:

Thank you, Gabe. This discussion kind of came up because one of the ways that we're evaluating under the five criteria of GORRC is 'what's the cost effectiveness of a board?' and so, that's kind of what lead us to if it's a sub registration process. You're never going to be cut... equal out with boards and registration. That's just not possible, but this would kind of make it a little bit closer than half the cost of setting up a new board. So, that was kind of what started this, and that kind of leads us into the discussion of the draft report. And again, we haven't had... we do not have finalized findings yet, but if I could point you guys to the report somewhere in the binder. Looks like this.

How we started this was just a basic introduction of what the bill is... of the bill and going through that. A description of the proposed legislation, and we understand as a council that we're evaluating a specific piece of legislation so if we end up as a committee deciding to kind of recommend the board looks a little different than what the legislation does that... our recommendation will be: it looks a little different than the legislation that's written. So just as a note on that, but we go through and talk about how it's proposed, the specific definition of recreational therapy, and then we've already added in here some of the impacts that Doctor Wolfe presented and sent to us. We've added that for you guys to kind of peruse. Basically, that there is a potential for harm, that if these people aren't licensed, in some kind of a way, that there is a harm for people. And then we talk about what is currently required of recreational therapists, and what y'all currently go through with the national certification process. We go over what the board, as written in H. B. 704 looks like, and then talk about how recreational therapy is done in other states. The four states that have licenses, then we talk about the ones... I'm sorry, the four states that have rec boards, and then the rest of the states that have just a licensure process of some kind.

That kind of leads down to the findings, which is kind of what I want to just go over. So, what we have to look at according to the code section that establishes GORRC is where, the five things, whether there is harm that will endanger the safety, whether there... the occupation requires a specific set of training, skills. Whether the citizens may be effectively protected by another means. What's the overall cost effectiveness and economic impact of this, and then whether there are means other than state regulations to protect the interests of the state. So, kind of going through everything we talked about this morning and last meeting, we've drafted the report to kind of have three kind of preliminary findings, but not recommendation.

So, we kind of said that if left unregulated there is a potential harm for citizens. So, you know, based off the testimony from Doctor Wolfe, there are some cases of harm that are present in Georgia, North Carolina, and New Hampshire. But the majority of them are surrounding the lack of knowledge of recreation therapy as a practice. Lack of knowledge from consumers, from Georgians. So, we wrote that by doing some sort of licensing for this profession, unlicensed people would not be able to present themselves as somebody who would provide these services. So, we think that kind of addresses the main concerns of what you guys are kind of talking about.

The second thing is the specialized skills or training are important for insuring that care is provided because as you have said multiple times, if you're taking somebody with cerebral palsy out water skiing, or whatever, you want to make sure that the person who is taking them out water skiing, or you know, they have some sort of knowledge of what they're doing, rather than just a parks and rec guy. So, we did point out that we found that there is some safety at risk for Georgians.

The third thing that we found was that though there is some kind of other means of protection, meaning the national certification, the complete effectiveness of this is unclear. So, we put there that there is a national certification, but nobody particularly knows what that means, or what that is, it's easy to pass off. So overall that's kind of what the draft report says, and I would like to open it up to the council for kind of comments on that, and kind of the direction of where we like to go with report. And then after that I'll allow for public comment for those who signed up.

Kelly Dudley, State Accounting Office

Have a question on clarification. If we were to put this as a subset under occupational therapy, does that mean that person has to have both? Or is it where they only have to have a recreational...

Gabriel Sterling, Secretary of State's Office:

Not being a lawmaker, but having a basic understanding of this, and remember I've been in this office for seven months, I may defer to for Jessica on

this. The law could be written in such a way as recreational therapists could be licensed and everything and placed under on the occupational therapy board, not as a subset of the occupational therapy license itself.

Anna Wrigley Miller, Office of Planning and Budget:

Other questions? Well, alright then. I guess I'd like to try to get kind of a feeling of where the council wants to go with this. Is there anyone who wants to put a motion together about how we want to write the findings and the recommendations for this?

Gabriel Sterling, Secretary of State's Office:

Madam chairman, just given the outlines that you gave us from what GORCC is supposed to do, and given we're in an environment right now where the governor's ordered us to cut four percent (4%) from our respective budgets, and given some of the testimony we had at the end of the last meeting was 'we want to try to eliminate red tape.' We're adding some red tape, but it's for the protection of others. I believe doing a sublicense and registration or certificate format, whichever one is best in this situation, ought to be the direction that this council recommends moving forward for the licensing or registration of recreation therapist in the state

Anna Wrigley Miller, Office of Planning and Budget:

Does anybody have a second on that?

Kelly Dudley seconded, and there were 7 votes for the direction suggested by Gabriel Sterling, Chairman Powell abstained, and Chairman Hufstetler was absent. The final count was 7-0-1.

So now, I don't have the signup sheet, but if you signed up, would you come up. Say your name please.

Brianna Panosian, Sunrise Senior Living at Huntcliff Summit II:

My name is Brianna Panosian. So, I am the secretary for Georgia Therapeutic Recreation Association. As well, I work for Sunrise Senior Living. To give you all an idea of what recreational therapy looks like in my setting is I, and one other in the eleven buildings in Georgia, are the only recreational therapists in our settings right now for Sunrise Senior Living.

But there's a lot of other senior committee that say that they offer, you know, recreational therapy or therapeutic recreation. And so really, what the difference is is that on in our setting we work with a lot of, you know, with our older population is a lot of different things going on with them. Whether the

physical or emotional or social, and often times, you know, we are activity based, so my direct role right now is an activity and volunteer coordinator, but with being a C. T. R. S. I'm actually able to provide recreational therapy services for my residents. And how that makes a huge difference between just being able to provide activities for them is really the purposefulness behind it. Often times, you know, activities are means of distraction, and can get their minds off certain things for a minute or two, but really doing individualized treatment plans with my clientele and with my older adults, it also allows for them to really gain so much more than just activities. I really think that having this credential and this license to differentiate ourselves between just traditional activities is why it's so important in my setting. Because, like I said, so many times people use that title of recreational therapist or therapeutic recreation specialist when they're not in fact trained and what not on what we are all trained on to provide to our clientele.

As well with that I've had the opportunity to have an intern for this past summer session, and in her previous internship she was also working in an older adult facility. She often says, you know, my previous internship was a lot different than this. It was activity based. So, having a C.T.R.S. who is licensed would give the opportunity for us to make sure that the continuum of education is consistent across the board, so everybody is really getting the proper training to go into these different settings and to be able to perform to the level of expectation that we have for C.T.R.S.s. So that kind of gives an idea of my setting and how recreational therapy really does affect my clientele. Any questions?

Gabriel Sterling, Secretary of State's Office:

As you noted, you're one of two in your organization that does this. How did you come across it? And one of the things that I think is a concern of this board is adding a license adds an extra layer for people to get to do the services. Have y'all talked as a secretary organization about ways to entice people to come into your... your occupation to help the people who do need this? Because once we put this license in, the number of human beings getting recreational therapy, good, bad, indifferent, will go down out of the gate. So, do you know the kind of pipeline you have for people who are training for this in their perspective colleges and training courses right now.

Brianna Panosian, Sunrise Senior Living at Huntcliff Summit II:

Definitely. So, going off of that, we have Georgia southern. Right now, as well, my intern is actually from Central Michigan University, I'm also from East Carolina University. With this, you know, like I was saying, the consistency of education across the board, having those quality internships, and having that licensure actually brings people into our state because people want to have that quality, and as well, they want to learn from professionals who are going to set them up for success in their field. And with these regulations in place that would ensure that so we can say, 'Hey we have this in the state of Georgia,' and that's actually bringing people from out the state... outside of the state to come to Georgia for these things. As well, for Sunrise Senior Living I'm one of two. When

I first got into this it was because I worked at a skilled nursing facility. I was actually their recreational therapy intern there, and the sales director of Sunrise, the one that I work at now who is now part of our regional team, she said, 'Hey, this position's open. I think that you have a skill set that we really could tap into as an organization, and we would appreciate to bring to Sunrise. And I think it's something different that would set us apart from a lot of other senior living.'

So, there's definitely a trend in the movement in senior livings to go towards something more like this rather than the traditional activities director. Just in the sense, the baby boomer generation is looking for more than just BINGO. They're looking for the purposeful. They don't want to stop skiing. They don't want to stop playing golf. As a recreational therapist we have the skill set to allow them to continue doing this. Traditional activity directors do not have that skill set in order to be able to teach them how to do these things and facilitate these things successfully, and safely as well. So, that's really kind of how I got into it, and we also hope to continue to grow it within Sunrise Senior Living. Every time there's an open position for an active director, you know, my regional team always comes to me and says, 'Hey, who do you know? Who can, you know, we hopefully put into this position or, you know, put them through the hiring process?' And through schools, like Georgia Southern, as well as you know, in our local area, well not local area, but states nearby, such as North Carolina you have U.N.C.W. My internship supervisor has had multiple students from U.N.C.W. Like I said, people are willing to travel from anywhere in this country if it's somewhere that's gonna be a quality internship that's going to prepare them for success in the future. So, that's what we can provide. Thank you.

Anna Wrigley Miller, Office of Planning and Budget:

Next person.

Kevin Enright, Special Olympics Georgia, Augusta Stars:

I'm Kevin Enright from with Augusta, Georgia. I have been a C.T.R.S. for over twenty-five (25) years now. For the last twenty-four (24) years, I have a Special Olympics Georgia team, from Augusta, the Augusta Stars. So, I kinda represent the community based recreational therapists. I'm lucky, I don't have to stay in a four (4) wall building, so just about everything I do is either outside or is in the community. I like to say I'm in the community's face. So, I'm letting them know what my— and I have two of my athletes with me today, if you want to ask them any questions, but I'm letting them know what they're capable of doing. Everybody knows Special Olympics is something where they do sports and they get an award. As much as I like awards, and I like to see them get their awards, I do not focus on the awards myself. I look at their... I'm... every day I'm trying to improve their life skills. So, I'm looking at the gross and fine motor skills, their interactions with each other, with you, when we go out to a restaurant, I expect them to order, or they get some help from us. I don't always expect them to pay for it. Usually comes out of mine.

Following directions, listening to me, following my directions, and then building on their self-esteem, and that's where the awards come in. I always say when they win on the field, they win in life. They just grow and grow. We also work on like financial things, and that's all part of being a recreational therapist, that we keep growing. I have a great job, although it's volunteer for me now, but I get to see them grow every day. We get to use recreation to teach life skills, simply put. And I have worked with people who do not have the training, and they don't... they don't do things the way I do. They teach the sport. I teach the skill. I believe that's the difference between myself and somebody who's not a certified therapeutic recreation specialists.

They are there if you want to ask him anything. They just came from competition, and there were training right now.

Gabriel Sterling, Secretary of State's Office:

What field? What sport?

Jonna West, Department of Agriculture:

in reference to athletes raising their hands to answer Go ahead.

Raven Allen, Special Olympics Georgia, Augusta Stars:

I'm doing horseback riding.

Kim Way, Special Olympics Georgia, Augusta Stars:

Bocce.

Raven Allen, Special Olympics Georgia, Augusta Stars:

We just got done with bowling. We got third place.

Kevin Enright, Special Olympics Georgia, Augusta Stars:

So, I just took seventy (70) people to Warner Robins, fifty (50) of them were more athletes, to compete in bowling, and I'll take probably that many down to Valdosta in October to compete in bocce, cycling, and golf. And then I'm sending four to the horse show that same weekend in Gainesville, Georgia. We compete year-round. We train and compete year-round. But that's the program, and that's what I do. So, I want to let you know. I really... At twenty-five years of this, I'm probably in the downward. It would be really nice to see licensure of some sort come long before I'm done. Thank you.

Anna Wrigley Miller, Office of Planning and Budget:

Any more people signed up to talk?

Kasey Lawton, Georgia Southern University:

Hi there. My name's Kasey Lawton, and I am a current student at Georgia Southern. I just completed my internship at the Shepherd Center in the Spinal Cord Injury Day Program. And this licensure bill means a lot to me as a student, as my education is extremely important to me, and us being a licensed field will, I believe, not only draw practitioners from other states in but draw students in. Georgia Southern is the only university in Georgia that offers recreational therapy, and I think that's something to be highlighted through the state of Georgia and through our university system. And so, having the licensure in the field will also bring students to the state and the university system, I think that's something that's important.

And like Brianna was saying of the other students from different universities, I've also seen that in my internship. I have a... there's a co-intern at Shepherd Center, and she's from Michigan, as well, and just us comparing our educations and the state boards and stuff, we've seen a lot of differences. And I'm very thankful for the education I've gotten here, but I think that licensure in the state of Georgia will only highlight the state of Georgia and recreational therapy in our state even more to draw in practitioners, and students as well, to our state.

IV. Closing

Anna Wrigley Miller, Office of Planning and Budget:

I think there's one more person who had signed up... Well then, thanks everybody for coming today. I just want to go over the next meeting I've given you all draft copies of this. I have spell checked it, but I also love other spell checks. Let me know if there is anything in it that you guys see. Let me know by the end of next week, and at our next meeting we will have a report to vote on, and we'll be done with this one. And then also at our next meeting, we'll start HB 417. I sent around an email around asking for dates. We got some tentative ones. We will finalize for the last two meetings of the next bill.

So, as is a reminder one more time, our next meeting is in room one twenty-five (125) not the mezzanine. No other changes. There's nothing else. Thank you.

Gabriel Sterling, Secretary of State's Office:

Motion to adjourn

multiple seconds given

Anna Wrigley Miller, Office of Planning and Budget:

Meeting adjourned.