

Thursday January 19th, 2023
Senate Transportation Committee
Senate Bill Number 2191

Chairman Clemens and Committee Members,

My name is John Schueller. I would like to thank you for having me here today. I am testifying in support of SB2191. I am currently a 3rd year physical therapy student at the University of Mary in Bismarck, ND on track to graduate with my Doctor of Physical Therapy in April 2023. Upon graduation, it is my intention to continue residing and working in North Dakota. Therefore, I have personal and professional interest in this bill as a future physical therapist.

Physical therapists play a vital role in the rehabilitation and recovery of patients with mobility impairments. These patients often require mobility impaired parking certificates to ensure appropriate accessibility to buildings and parking areas. As front-line healthcare professionals, physical therapists have the appropriate educational training to be able to assess the mobility needs of their patients/clients and determine if a mobility impaired parking certificate is necessary during their recovery from an injury or as a result of their long-term mobility status due to a variety of disabling conditions (some examples include stroke, amputation, or rheumatoid arthritis). In my education, we have learned and practiced many tests and screenings such as fall risk assessments, gait and wheelchair mobility, energy expenditure with walking, and speed and distance of walking that appropriately identify individuals with mobility impairments that would require a mobility impaired parking certificate.

Allowing physical therapists in ND to sign off on mobility impaired parking permits for patients/clients who need them would improve the overall accessibility and convenience for those patients/clients with mobility impairments. This would also help to reduce the burden on other healthcare professionals, such as primary care physicians, who are currently responsible for assessing patients' need for these parking certificates. Additionally, physical therapists can educate patients/clients in the rules and responsibilities associated with using mobility impaired certificates.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would ask that you vote yes as you consider SB2191. If you have any questions, I would be happy to try to answer them for you.

Sincerely,

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