

Dear Senator Lee

I am a physical therapist practicing at Essentia Health in Fargo. I work with a variety of patients of ages 11yo to 99yo in an outpatient orthopedics setting. As one of your constituents, I am contacting you today regarding SB 2122.

As a skilled and licensed physical therapist, I am currently unable to order imaging. SB 2122 would allow that. I have had several instances over the 5 years I've been practicing that I felt imaging would be beneficial for the patient and their care.

I grew up outside of Colfax, ND. I know the joys of growing up rural, but I also understand the challenges it can have. One of these being access to health care. Requiring a patient to follow-up with the physician and get an order for imaging from them rather than Thankfully, I work in a hospital based clinic, so if I feel additional imaging is necessary, I'm able to discuss this with the physician fairly quickly and the patient can usually get in rightaway. In rural areas, this is not always the case. Patients may have to wait longer before discussing it with their physician or may make or follow-up It is in the best interest of the patients to pass SB 2122.

A 5-year retrospective practice analysis indicates that physical therapists have sufficient training and make appropriate clinical decisions regarding diagnostic imaging. This study by Keil et al,<sup>1</sup> found that out of 88 patients who received referrals by physical therapists for 108 images, diagnostic imaging was appropriate in 91% of cases. There are 377,509 people that live in rural North Dakota, which is just under 50% of the population. There are 53 rural health clinics and 14 federally qualified health center sites outside of urbanized areas. With a geographically dispersed population in the state of North Dakota, having the ability to properly manage all patient presentations is imperative to reduce patient burden including unnecessary travel, increased costs, and delays in healthcare services.

Therefore, I am asking for a "do pass" on SB 2122. Thank you for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

Kathleen Bachman, PT, DPT