

Legislative Update

Nancy M. Porambo

January, 2007

By the end of 2006, the PA Chapter had been moving at lightning speed toward licensure. Unfortunately, the bill came to the end of a two-year legislative period and will have to be reintroduced in the early part of 2007. We are also in the talking phase with the physical therapists who state they support the bill, but oppose some of the language in the bill.

Great things did happen legislatively, however. Representative Keith McCall, primary sponsor of HB 1643 became the Majority Leader of the House of Representatives! Rep. McCall has been extremely supportive of our bill in the past and has assured his continued support in the upcoming session.

Rep. Gannon, Chairman of the Professional Licensure Committee did not win his re-election bid and will, therefore, no longer hold his position as Chair of the Committee. Rep. Gannon held the massage therapist bill back for numerous years and required two public hearings without moving the bill from his committee for a vote in the House even though we provided research-based evidence of the therapeutic value of massage therapy. A new Chairperson of the Professional Licensure Committee will be named in January.

Our legislative presence has been great. During Massage Therapy Awareness Week, PA Chapter massage therapists volunteered to do chair massage in the Capitol Rotunda for legislators and their staff. Several members made personal visits to the offices of legislators. Many thanks to the volunteers for taking time from their busy practice to help in this endeavor!

A strategic plan is being developed that includes strong grassroots campaigns by members. We are in need of members in every county! If you have never been legislatively involved, now is the time to come on board. Our bill will come up for vote this year and it is imperative that we have as many interested members helping, even if it's to make a phone call. Please contact Scott Dugan, Govt. Relations Chairperson at mgchnds1@aol.com. Together, we can make a difference!