

March 27, 2019

Senate Committee on Health Care

The Honorable Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson, Chair

RE: Support for Senate Bill 887

Chair Monnes Anderson and Members of the Senate Committee on Health Care,

I am writing to urge your support of Senate Bill 887. Acupuncture is a relatively low-cost treatment that can be used for a variety of diagnoses, including pain, stress, anxiety, depression, and addictions. Even now, when opioid abuse has become an epidemic in Oregon and in the U.S., acupuncture is an alternative that provides real relief to patients. In fact, studies have shown that acupuncture leads to long-term savings in health care costs.

I am grateful acupuncture is a covered service for most insurance companies. However, in the course of getting treatment for our patients, I have encountered many barriers and hoops to jump through due to prior authorization requirements. Given the time it takes to submit prior authorization requests and then wait for the approval from insurance companies, patients are having to wait 1-4 weeks to obtain that approval, which affects patient treatment plans and outcomes.

Senate Bill 887 would help address this issue by allowing patients to have easier access to their acupuncture benefits. This bill would allow patients receive initial evaluation and up to 6 acupuncture treatments up to a maximum number allowed under the plan benefit for each episode of care. If additional treatments are needed, the insurer could require a prior authorization.

This bill would allow patients to receive the treatment they need in a timely manner. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kiana Ruff Jackson

New patient and Prior Authorization Coordinator

Earth-Moon Acupuncture