

Submitter: Emily Houston
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3824

As a licensed Doctor of Physical Therapy with 10 years' experience, I am writing in support of the passage of HB 3824. This bill recognizes the vital role that PTs play in Oregon's health care system and the doctorate level rigorous training, education, and experience that PTs bring to serve our patients and move them away from sickness toward wellness and hopefully fitness. It does not expand our practice scope beyond our capabilities, but rather allows us to properly apply our full training and education within our scope to better care for our patients. The below factors currently being excluded from our practice scope frankly forces us to be negligent in our care for our patients forcing us to withhold treatment we know could be helpful to them.

HB 3824A aligns the practice of physical therapy in Oregon with the Model Practice Act established by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy – in some cases, like dry needling, expanding care that is available in 46 others states, but currently not available in Oregon.

Specific to dry needling, Physical Therapists are arguably the most effective provider to use it. The body of evidence based practice suggests that passive modalities alone do not make significant long lasting changes. They make excellent short term changes and the magic is what you do right after! PTs are the professionals to take the benefits of less pain and muscle tension after dry needling and then to help that patient discover more mobility and strength they previously did not have to finally make a change in their pain and function. Withholding this benefit from Oregon residents seeking PT care would be clear negligence on the part of anyone voting against this bill.

In addition to dry needling, HB 3824A would allow physical therapists to certify a patient's disability placard or license plate application. This ability is vitally important especially given Oregon's shortage of providers and can help ensure that patients get adequate accommodations quickly and without unnecessary delay. PTs have Doctorate level education to be able to properly identify the need or lack of need for this designation.

Finally, HB 3824A would improve access, particularly in rural communities, to and timeliness of patient imaging by allowing PTs to order and interpret imaging. Over 10 other states have taken this action to help reduce patient cost burdens and improve patient outcomes by ensuring timeliness of care. As PTs, we understand the normal effects of aging that will be seen on imaging and how to properly educate our patients, but we are also competent in identifying medical red flags where imaging is appropriate.

Thank you for your time and consideration of Oregon residents' health.
Emily Houston, PT, DPT, OCS