

Submitter: Catherine Eppelsheimer
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3824

Acupuncture continues to rise in popularity among the public as they witness the pain relieving benefits for themselves. Word is spreading. Research demonstrates its effectiveness. It is a testament to the abundant gifts of acupuncture (including the therapy's few side effects) that another field of practice seeks to utilize insertive needles. As an acupuncturist, I am grateful for the growing wave of interest of Physical Therapists into the effectiveness of acupuncture. It is my desire that they refer their patients to acupuncturists who hold master and doctorate levels in their field — who have spent between 3 and 5 years to obtain what the Oregon Medical Board deemed sufficient education to practice this art-as-medicine.

As it currently stands, acupuncture is not a lucrative field. The insurance rates are sometimes appallingly low. This is another call for change, for another time. Acupuncturists did not enter this field to obtain wealth, but it was our hope that we could support the payments of the required student loans. We take insurance often as a public service to our patients, to make this medicine affordable to them. And as it is, we are barely scraping by. I beg you — please do not divert our patients to other fields like Physical Therapy, who already have myriad billable skills. Please allow our patients to find us and receive the exemplary care we offer as fully trained medical professionals. Acupuncture is not a skill that can be taught in a weekend seminar. It is medicine with legacy and power — a lineage worthy of honor and respect.

Thank you for your time.
Dr. Catherine Eppelsheimer, LAc, DACM