



ALPINE ACUPUNCTURE LLC

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,

As a licensed acupuncturist practicing in Bend, Oregon, I urge your support of SB 887. This bill is of concern for the health not only of Central Oregonians, but all Oregon citizens. The policy we propose will improve the prior authorization process to improve access to patients' acupuncture benefits.

I have practiced acupuncture in Bend for the past 15 years. I have treated thousands of patients. Most of my patients have insurance benefits that help pay for their visits. In recent years a cumbersome prior authorization process for access to one's acupuncture benefit has become the standard for several insurance companies in our state. We need to improve this system as it currently serves as a barrier to care for many in need of Acupuncture. As you know, Acupuncture has repeatedly been shown to be a cost effective, cost saving complementary treatment for many diagnoses. These include, but are not limited to, chronic pain, opioid and other drug and alcohol addictions, stress related disorders, trauma and other mental health conditions.

The current prior authorization process usurps my time that would otherwise be spent with patients. It also delays and unnecessarily inhibits a patient's access to acupuncture causing more suffering and pain. In some cases, patients have been known to "give up" on seeking effective treatment for their concerns.

I urge you to vote "yes" for this bill so that it may become law in Oregon. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Steven A. Foster-Wexler, LAc