

Submitter: Ezra Gabbert
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3824

My name is Ezra Gabbert, and I am writing to testify in support of House Bill 3824, which allows physical therapists to prescribe durable medical equipment. I am a paraplegic, I have spent significant time in physical therapy, have experienced firsthand how essential physical therapists are in helping myself and others like me maintain mobility, independence, and overall well-being.

I started seeing a physical therapist when I was 6 years old. I have spina bifida and a slew of other comorbidities, and from early in my life physical therapists were there to help me live my life the best I could. Early on my physical therapist connected me with other healthcare professionals, like the person who made my leg braces for many years, and had a strong need of what my needs were, in a way that a lot of doctors just couldn't.

Throughout my life physical therapists have often been the most accessible healthcare professionals for me. They understand my mobility needs in a way that other healthcare professionals can't, and they have played a crucial role in ensuring I have the right equipment, whether it be essential wheelchair parts, braces, or other durable medical devices that directly impact my daily life. They have been invaluable in pointing me in the right direction when it comes to the equipment that I need. In the past physical therapists have been able to direct to other healthcare professionals, and those professionals have gone on to prescribe me equipment that the physical therapist should have been able to. The current system often requires additional steps, like obtaining a prescription from another medical provider whom I have less frequent contact with, which creates unnecessary delays in getting the equipment I need. In the past these delays can have caused me serious consequences, such as discomfort, decreased mobility, and secondary health issues.

By passing HB 3824, we can remove these barriers and allow physical therapists, who already have the expertise and direct patient interactions, to prescribe the equipment that their patients rely on. This change will improve efficiency, reduce unnecessary burdens on patients and the healthcare system, and most importantly, ensure that people like me can access the medical devices we need in a timely manner.

I urge you to support this bill and make it easier for individuals with disabilities to receive the care and equipment they need without delay. Thank you for your time and consideration.