

Submitter:	Neisha Strait
On Behalf Of:	Improved Patient Access to Care
Committee:	Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic:	HB3824

As a physical therapist practicing in Oregon, passage of HB 3824 is critically important because it acknowledges the vital role that PT's play in Oregon's health care system. Physical therapists undergo rigorous training and have extensive education and clinical experiences which make them more than qualified to serve our patients. Personally, passage of HB 3824 would improve my ability to serve patients by helping ensure patients are able to get appropriate DME in a timely fashion. Currently, due to the lack of providers in our area, it can take weeks to sometimes a month to get patients access to appropriate medical equipment, often putting the patient at risk for falls or further injury due to the lack of care. As it stands, I have to recommend a referral for a AFO (for example), submit my recommendation to MD to consider and then sign off on, wait for the MD office to sign and perhaps fax it back or fax it to the DME, then wait for the DME or the medical office to call the patient then wait to get into an appointment and then hopefully get the device they need which may need to be ordered or further backlogged due to fabrication. This is terribly inefficient and the patients deserve better. HB 3824 also 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 other states but not currently available in Oregon. As a physical therapist in Oregon, this is disturbing as we all have the training and qualifications yet are not allowed to use that expertise to better serve our patients. HB 3824 would also improve access, particularly in rural communities, to and timeliness of patient imaging by allowing PT's 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. I will never forget one client who kept going to the ER for back pain and they kept imaging the back but when they showed up in my clinic, it was obvious the cause of the back pain was severe OA in both of the client's hips but because no provider but me had actually performed a thorough assessment, nobody else picked upon this, resulting in a lot of money wasted on back imaging and ER visits. Lastly HB3824 enhances patient safety by adopting statutory language included in the PT Model Practice Act related to sexual misconduct to ensure the PT licensing board has appropriate authority related to misconduct that is verbal, physical and also through electronic means. For these reasons, I support HB3824.