

Submitter: Allison Sam
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3824
Chair and Members of the Senate Committee,

My name is Allison Sam, PT, DPT, and I am a practicing physical therapist in Portland, Oregon. I am writing in support of HB 3824, the PT Modernization Act. I greatly appreciate the opportunity to speak in favor of this important legislation, which aims to provide Oregonians with greater access to faster, safer, and more effective healthcare.

First, this bill seeks to include dry needling within the scope of physical therapy practice in Oregon. Dry needling is already permitted for physical therapists in 46 other states, often alongside acupuncture. Physical therapists receive doctoral-level education, with rigorous training in human movement and the neuromusculoskeletal system. Dry needling is an evidence-based, effective treatment tool that, if adopted, would expand patient access and improve clinical outcomes.

Second, as an outpatient orthopedic physical therapist, I routinely use clinical reasoning to identify potential red flags—signs or symptoms that may require further medical evaluation such as imaging or laboratory testing. Allowing physical therapists to refer for imaging when appropriate would streamline care, reduce overall healthcare costs, and ultimately lead to better patient outcomes.

Oregon has long been a direct access state, meaning patients can see physical therapists without a physician referral. This requires clinicians, particularly in outpatient settings, to be highly skilled in differential diagnosis and vigilant in monitoring signs and symptoms that fall outside our scope of care. Expanding our scope to include dry needling and the ability to refer for imaging aligns with the advanced training we receive and the responsibilities we already uphold.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Allison Sam, PT, DPT