

Submitter:

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On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Health Care

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB3824

As a physical therapist practicing in Oregon, passage of HB 3824 is vitally important because it recognizes the vital role that PTs play in Oregon's health care system and the rigorous training, education, and experience that PTs bring to serve our patients. Not only that, but physical therapists spend more time with their patients compared to other healthcare providers and this amount of time gives them the opportunity to make the most accurate assessments about their patients. Personally, passage of HB 3824 would improve my ability to serve patients by giving me tools that I feel are well within in my scope of practice and training to further help my patients in their recovery process and serve my community as a health care provider. Some of the barriers we currently face as PT's slow and hinder our patients' abilities to recover in an appropriate time frame.

HB 3824A 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 others states, but currently not available in Oregon. I used to work in Idaho as a PT and it is frustrating to know a technique that may help my patients, but just because of where I live I cannot use dry needling that I know would be helpful to my patients.

HB 3824A would allow physical therapists to certify a patient's disability placard or license plate application. This ability is vitally important especially given Oregon's shortage of providers and can help ensure that patients get adequate accommodations quickly and without unnecessary delay. This is within our scope of practice, as it pertains to movement disorders and level of functional impairments. PT's are movement specialists and this is an item that falls exactly in our specialty and would prevent the need for people to see further medical providers with this task and crowd the already-strained medical system due to scarcity of providers.

HB 3824A would improve access, particularly in rural communities, to and timeliness of patient imaging by allowing PTs 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. Currently the process is: go to medical provider (likely urgent care due to inability to get in with PCP), then they refer to PT to see if we can determine if they need imaging, then refer back to that medical provider, who then refers to imaging. Our expertise has long been used to make this decision, but there are so many extra steps and this wastes time and money in an already strained healthcare system, when peoples' health is on the line.

Ensures patient safety by protecting the title “Doctor of Physical Therapy or DPT” to ensure that only those holding a doctoral degree in physical therapy are permitted to use this title and abbreviation. Allowing other people, intentionally or not, to use DPT (such as personal trainers) creates confusion among those seeking health and preys on the lack of health literacy of the general population.

Enhances patient safety by adopting statutory language included in the PT Model Practice Act related to sexual misconduct to ensure that the PT licensing board has appropriate authority related to misconduct that is verbal, physical, and also through electronic means.