

Submitter:

Ray Wingert

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Health Care

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB3824

My name is Ray Wingert and I'm writing to ask for your support in passing HB 3824. I have been a client of physical therapists in our community for at least ten years having experienced neck, shoulder, back and leg pain. I was aware of dry needling as a method of pain relief and improving musculoskeletal performance; unfortunately, it is prohibited by law as a treatment for me. The acupuncture lobby has influenced lawmakers to prohibit its use in Oregon. Please consider the following before making your decision on this important bill.

First, there are significant practical differences between acupuncture discipline and dry needling as used within modern western medicine. Dry needling is a modality used by physical therapists which focuses on specific areas of the musculoskeletal system for the purpose of pain relief, improvement of blood flow and healing, as well as improvement of range of motion and muscle performance. Acupuncture focuses less on specific pain and injury, and more on the body as a whole. It depends on ancient Chinese medical philosophy which defines energy flow throughout the body, and channels and redirects that flow to balance the body's energy. It does not focus on specific areas of pain as does dry needling. Both are valid disciplines; however, they are quite different in their goals and techniques.

Second, much is being made by the acupuncture community about the education required for safe insertion of needles. A quick review of curricula for acupuncture certification vs doctoral level physical therapy reveals that acupuncture education is heavily focused on the Chinese philosophy of meridians and energy flow whereas doctoral level physical therapy curricula focus much more heavily upon anatomy and physiology, musculoskeletal mechanics, neurology, and physiology of pain and the relief thereof. Physical therapists are eminently more qualified to understand the impact and consequences of inserting needles into the musculoskeletal system and to do so keeping in mind the safety and well being of the patient.

On a personal note, I've seen firsthand the dedication and rigor (and expense) required to obtain the Doctor of Physical Therapy diploma. Our daughter earned her DPT as well as a post-doctoral certification in orthopedic physical therapy. She has studied and is certified in dry needling. However, since moving back to Oregon and setting up a practice she's been prohibited by law from using dry needling in her practice. It's time that Oregon joined the 46 other states in the country that include dry needling as a modality in the arsenal of tools for our physical therapists.

I urge your support of HB 3824.