

Submitter: Karen Oyama
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3824

Dear Chairs,

My name is Dr. Karen Oyama, MD and I am a retired pathologist in Oregon. I am writing to ask for your support in passing House Bill 3824, the PT Modernization Act.

Support for Physical Therapists Ordering Durable Medical Equipment (DME)
Physical therapists with doctoral degrees (DPTs) are uniquely qualified to prescribe durable medical equipment due to their specialized education and training. They complete extensive coursework in biomechanics, gait analysis, and assistive technology assessment that is both comprehensive and highly skilled. Their expertise in functional mobility and comprehensive understanding of activity limitations makes them ideal professionals to determine appropriate DME needs. As a user of physical therapy, I can personally acknowledge that allowing qualified PTs to directly order DME would expedite patient care while allowing primary care physicians to focus on more complex medical issues that require their specific expertise.

Support for Physical Therapists Ordering Imaging
Physical therapists receive rigorous training in musculoskeletal assessment and specific evidence-based clinical decision rules that guide imaging decisions. They routinely apply protocols like the Ottawa Ankle Rules and Canadian C-Spine Rules—the same guidelines used in primary care—to determine when imaging is warranted. Their doctoral education includes substantial training in recognizing red flags and understanding imaging appropriateness criteria.

Currently, when a physical therapist evaluates a patient and determines imaging is necessary, they must refer the patient to a physician solely to order the same imaging the PT has already determined appropriate. This creates unnecessary appointment delays, increases costs to patients through additional visits, and adds administrative burden to primary care practices. Granting PTs imaging privileges would streamline care pathways, reduce delays in diagnosis, and allow me to dedicate more time to patients requiring complex medical management.

Closing statement

As primary care providers face increasing demands on time and expertise, I strongly support updating Oregon's physical therapy practice act through HB 3824. Modernizing PT practice privileges would benefit both healthcare providers and patients across Oregon by reducing unnecessary visits, decreasing wait times, lowering healthcare costs, and allowing all providers to practice at the top of their

education and training.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dr. Karen Oyama, MD??