

May 4, 2025

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 3824

As a Doctor of Physical Therapy practicing in Oregon for the past three years, I support passing HB 3824 in its entirety. This bill is vital to expanding the physical therapy scope of practice, recognizing the important role physical therapists play in the healthcare system, and ensuring timely and necessary access to care for patients across the state. This bill would allow physical therapists to prescribe durable medical equipment, order diagnostic imaging, perform dry needling, and certify disability placard applications.

Currently, our healthcare system is overburdened with patients experiencing long wait times for care, increased medical costs, and multiple appointments and referrals required along a plan of care. This bill would not only expand the scope of physical therapy practice, but it would improve patient access to care by reducing wait times for multiple providers, reducing gaps in care that lead to prolonged courses of treatment, and reducing the financial burden on patients and insurance providers alike for these services.

As an outpatient physical therapist with direct access, I am frequently the first medical provider to assess a patient with a new injury. In many cases, these patients are appropriate for further imaging to rule in or out a fracture or may require durable medical equipment to enhance their healing and recovery. The passage of HB 3824 would allow me to provide my patients with the appropriate imaging order or DME at the time of visit rather than referring out to other providers, requiring a prolonged course of treatment, delayed healing, and increased financial burden for the patient. This expedited care becomes even more important in rural areas of our state where not only are wait times long, but providers may be located out of the patient's geographical area, requiring multiple long trips to obtain care and further delaying healing.

HB 3824 would also allow physical therapists in Oregon to perform dry needling – a modality that is available by physical therapists in 46 other states. This would further improve patient outcomes by adding a tool to our toolbox for non-pharmacological pain management interventions. These safe, evidence-based treatments are vital for patients to receive pain-relief, allowing them to engage in other active aspects of physical therapy care and maximize their independence and function.

Physical therapists are highly educated and uniquely qualified healthcare providers who play a vital role in improving patient outcomes in today's healthcare landscape. I urge you to pass HB 3824 to expand the scope of physical therapy practice to allow us to better serve our patients throughout the state of Oregon.

Sincerely,

Sydney Neumann, PT, DPT