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Senate Health Care Committee

Oregon State Legislature

900 Court St. NE

Salem, OR 97301

**Subject: Support for HB 3824A – The PT Practice Modernization Act**

Dear Members of the Senate Health Care Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 3824A, the PT Practice Modernization Act. As a physical therapist practicing in Oregon, I believe this legislation is essential to modernizing our profession and improving patient access to timely and effective care.

HB 3824A recognizes the critical role that physical therapists play in Oregon's healthcare system and acknowledges the rigorous training, education, and experience that PTs bring to patient care. One of the most impactful provisions of this bill is the ability for physical therapists to order and interpret imaging. Recent research has demonstrated the safety and efficacy of PTs utilizing diagnostic imaging in clinical practice. A study published in *Physical Therapy* found that physical therapists demonstrated appropriate use of diagnostic imaging in 91% of cases, ensuring judicious and effective patient management. Additionally, research has shown that allowing PTs to refer patients for imaging improves care continuity, enhances clinical outcomes, and reduces costs.

Furthermore, HB 3824A, by providing access to prompt imaging allows PTs to quickly refer patients to other medical professionals when imaging identifies the need for additional intervention or medical care beyond physical therapy. Currently, there is lengthy delays in referring the patient to the medical provider, then the patient is referred to an imaging center. This streamlined approach ensures that patients receive timely and appropriate treatment, reducing unnecessary delays and improving overall healthcare efficiency.

Another critical component of HB 3824A is the inclusion of dry needling within the scope of physical therapy practice. Dry needling is a safe and effective treatment for musculoskeletal pain and dysfunction, as supported by peer-reviewed research. A study published in the *International Journal of Physical Therapy & Rehabilitation* found that dry needling is a well-tolerated intervention with minimal adverse events when performed by trained physical therapists. Additionally, the American Physical Therapy Association recognizes dry needling as a skilled intervention that enhances patient outcomes.

HB 3824A also aligns Oregon's physical therapy practice with the Model Practice Act established by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy. This alignment ensures that Oregon remains competitive with other states that have already adopted similar provisions, including allowing PTs to certify disability placard applications and protecting the title "Doctor of Physical Therapy" to maintain professional integrity. There are currently corporate fitness centers in Oregon which the personal trainers (unlicensed personnel) are using the "DPT" term as their title.

By passing HB 3824A, Oregon will improve patient access to care, particularly in rural communities, where timely imaging and referrals can significantly impact health outcomes. This legislation will also enhance patient safety by ensuring that PTs have the necessary authority to provide comprehensive care while maintaining high professional standards.

I urge you to support HB 3824A and help advance the modernization of physical therapy practice in Oregon. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy Brinker PT, DPT". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Timothy Brinker, PT, DPT, MBA**

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## References:

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2. Peterson, S., Heick, J. (2023). Referral Decision-Making and Care Continuity in Physical Therapist Practice. *Physical Therapy*, 103(5), pzad030.
3. Keil, A. P., Hazle, C., Maurer, A., Kittleson, C., Watson, D., Young, B., Rezac, S., Epsley, S., Baranyi, B. (2021). Referral for Imaging in Physical Therapist Practice: Key Recommendations for Successful Implementation. *Physical Therapy*, 101(3), pzab013.
4. Valdes, V. R. (2019). Dry Needling in Physical Therapy Practice: Adverse Events. *International Journal of Physical Therapy & Rehabilitation*, 5, IJPTR-157.
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