

Submitter: Joshua Kernen  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3824

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On Behalf Of: PT profession and patients across Oregon

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

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My name is Josh Kernen, and I am a physical therapist who has been practicing for 20 years in Portland, OR. I'm happy to submit testimony in support of HB 3824, which will help improve Oregonian's access to physical therapy. HB 3824 will align Oregon with national best practices to enhance patient safety, improve accessibility, and reduce healthcare costs. I'm asking you to support HB 3824 so that Oregon can:

- Align 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 expanding care that is available in 46 others states, but currently not available in Oregon.

- 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 care also aligns with privileges that PTs have in 13 other states.

- Improve access 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.

- 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. Currently, some entities are inappropriately utilizing "DPT", as an abbreviation for dynamic personal training, which is misleading for patients in Oregon. The title Doctor of Physical Therapy and DPT should be reserved solely for those individuals who have gone through that level of rigorous training and 7+ years of education vs. an online certification.

- 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.

I urge you to support this legislation for the benefit of Oregonians in need.

Thank you sincerely for your consideration,  
Josh Kernan, PT, DPT, CSCS