

Submitter: Patrick Gazzini  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3824

Members of the Senate Committee on Health Care,

My name is Patrick Gazzini and I live in Hillsboro, OR. I am writing in opposition to HB 3824, specifically the inclusion of “needle insertion” (Page 3, Line 37) in the physical therapy scope of practice. As a Licensed Acupuncturist practicing for 10 years in Oregon with hundreds of hours of additional training in Muscle Motor Point and Trigger Point Acupuncture (aka Dry Needling) I am an expert on the subject of needle insertion for therapeutic effect.

Dry needling is a highly skilled procedure requiring hundreds of hours of training to ensure patient safety and efficacy. To permit dry needling as this bill does without any specification of required training or certification would be reckless and likely to lead to patient injuries. There are good arguments for allowing Physical Therapists to dry needle, but Dry Needling should be the topic of its own bill. It should be considered and debated on its own merits and risks. It should be well-researched to specify training requirements to ensure patient safety and it should be regulated by the Oregon Medical Board as currently specified under Oregon Law (see below). It should absolutely not be hidden in one sentence (Page 3, Line 37) in an 18 page bill that presumably was written for a completely different purpose.

Under ORS 677.757(1)(a), “acupuncture” is explicitly defined as the stimulation of specific points on the body “by the insertion of needles”. The statute further affirms that acupuncture includes the use of electrical or mechanical devices with or without needles, which are also marketed under dry needling protocols.

In Oregon, acupuncture may only be practiced by those licensed by the Oregon Medical Board under ORS 677.759. Unauthorized practice of acupuncture—including any unlicensed needle insertion—is considered the unauthorized practice of medicine under ORS 677.765 and is subject to penalties.

This bill therefore directly conflicts with established state law by proposing to allow non-OMB-regulated practitioners (physical therapists) to perform a procedure that falls squarely within the legal definition of acupuncture.