

Submitter: Leigh Reece  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3824

Dear Senators,

I am writing to provide testimony in support of HB 3824 which will modernize the practice act for Physical Therapist Services in the state of Oregon. I have a Doctorate of Physical Therapy degree and work as a physical therapist in the home health setting. I provide skilled physical therapy services to older adults and those with disabilities who are homebound and not able to leave their home to receive these services in a traditional clinic setting.

There are many changes in this new practice act that will improve how physical therapists are able to practice in Oregon. One provision that will be especially meaningful in my day-to-day work is the ability to prescribe durable medical equipment (DME). As a physical therapist working in the home setting with my patients, I am uniquely positioned to help them get the DME that is best suited to their specific needs. I have the education and experience to determine medical necessity for many types of mobility equipment, ranging from a simple walker to a custom, complex power wheelchair.

Because of the antiquated laws surrounding ordering of DME, even though I have the education and experience to determine what equipment will work best for each particular patient, I am only able to recommend the equipment, but not to actually order or prescribe it. This means the patient then needs to schedule a separate face-to-face visit with their medical doctor to discuss the specific equipment, and the doctor's office must place the order. These extra, unnecessary steps often lead to delays or miscommunications, meaning the patient must wait an excessively long time to get the equipment they need.

In a time when there is already a shortage of primary care physicians, more pronounced in rural areas, this bill will help to take stress off the system. This bill will help improve access for patients to the care that they need in order to live healthy and fulfilling lives. I urge you to vote yes on HB 3824.

Sincerely,  
Leigh H. Reece, PT, DPT