

Submitter:

Jessica Steele-Thornborrow

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Health Care

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB3824

Jessica Steele-Thornborrow, DPT

Private Practice Physical Therapist

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Date: 05/06/2025

To: Members of the Oregon State Legislature

Re: Support for HB 3824A – The Physical Therapy Modernization Act

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jessica Steele-Thornborrow, and I am a Doctor of Physical Therapy practicing in a private clinic here in Oregon. I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 3824A, the Physical Therapy Modernization Act.

This bill offers pragmatic and much-needed updates to the scope of physical therapy practice in our state. Among its provisions, I am particularly encouraged by the section authorizing physical therapists to prescribe durable medical equipment (DME). This change is not only appropriate—it is long overdue.

In my daily practice, I work directly with patients who rely on tools like braces, mobility aids, or supports to regain function and independence. Yet despite having the expertise to assess, fit, and prescribe these devices, I must often funnel my recommendations through a primary care provider (PCP). These additional steps introduce unnecessary delays, increase healthcare costs, and—most frustratingly—compromise timely care for patients.

It's worth emphasizing: PCPs are not specifically trained in functional movement or therapeutic equipment. Asking them to serve as a middleman in DME prescriptions does nothing to improve care. In fact, it creates inefficiencies that burden the system and frustrate both patients and providers. HB 3824A resolves this problem by recognizing the autonomy and clinical expertise of physical therapists in areas where we are clearly qualified.

Beyond DME, this bill also makes thoughtful reforms that align with modern health care demands—like permitting physical therapists to administer vaccines and expanding access through telehealth. These updates ensure Oregon's physical therapy profession can meet the state's needs with flexibility, safety, and patient-centered care.

Please vote in favor of HB 3824A. This legislation doesn't just modernize practice—it honors the trust patients already place in physical therapists and ensures more timely, cost-effective, and direct care.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to the people of Oregon.

Sincerely,

Jessica Steele-Thornborrow, DPT

Private Practice Physical Therapist

