

Submitter: David Wachtel
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3824

Testimony Opposing HB3824

Submitted by Dr. David Wachtel, DACM, L.Ac.

Owner, InMotion Acupuncture | Certified Sports Medicine Acupuncturist (C.SMA)
Bend, Oregon

I am writing today in strong opposition to HB3824, a bill that proposes to allow practitioners who are not licensed acupuncturists to perform needling techniques on patients. As a licensed Doctor of Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine and a certified provider of Sports Medicine Acupuncture, I urge you to recognize how dangerous, irresponsible, and shortsighted this proposal truly is.

Acupuncture is not simply “sticking needles.” It is a complex, clinically nuanced medical practice that requires thousands of hours of rigorous education, supervised clinical experience, and anatomical precision. To suggest that other healthcare professionals—who do *not* undergo this level of specific training—can safely or effectively needle patients is a fundamental misunderstanding of what acupuncture entails and what patient safety demands.

Acupuncturists in Oregon must complete at least 3–4 years of postgraduate study, including extensive training in anatomy, physiology, pathology, needling technique, sterile procedure, and differential diagnosis. We pass national board exams and undergo continuing education to ensure that we are providing safe, evidence-informed care. By contrast, the dry needling workshops attended by some other providers may amount to a few days—or even just hours—of instruction, often without adequate hands-on supervision or understanding of the deeper risks involved.

****This is not turf protection. This is about protecting the public.**** Improper needling can cause nerve damage, punctured lungs, serious infections, and long-term complications. As the use of needling techniques expands to under-trained hands, adverse events *will* increase. We’ve seen this in other states. Oregon should not follow that path.

HB3824 represents a dilution of medical standards. It sends the wrong message—that it’s acceptable to bypass proper training, ignore best practices, and gamble with people’s health. It threatens the safety of our patients, undermines the integrity of the acupuncture profession, and opens the door to serious harm.

I urge lawmakers to reject this dangerous bill. Let's protect Oregon patients by ensuring that needling techniques remain in the hands of those who are thoroughly trained, licensed, and held to the highest standards of clinical excellence.

Respectfully,

Dr. David Wachtel, DACM, L.Ac.
InMotion Acupuncture | Bend, Oregon