

Submitter: Joshua Park
On Behalf Of: The People of Oregon
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3824

HB 3824, as currently written, would allow physical therapists to perform "needle insertion", a procedure explicitly defined as acupuncture under Oregon law.

As a licensed acupuncturist who received my doctorate in acupuncture here in the State of Oregon, I am deeply concerned that this bill poses a serious public safety risk.

Acupuncturists undergo between 2,000 and 4,000 hours of specialized training, including hundreds of hours of hands-on clinical supervision. We must also pass three rigorous board examinations before we are legally allowed to perform this medical procedure in Oregon.

In stark contrast, physical therapists often learn "dry needling" in weekend courses that provide as little as 27 to 50 hours of instruction with minimal clinical oversight. This discrepancy in training is not only drastic, it is dangerous. Allowing someone to insert needles into another person's body after a weekend course is the equivalent of allowing a nurse or physician assistant to perform surgery after a seminar. It endangers patients and undermines public trust.

The Oregon Attorney General affirmed this concern in a formal opinion on May 17, 2017, stating that needle insertion is not within the legal scope of practice for physical therapists licensed in Oregon. HB 3824, if passed as written, would bypass that legal precedent and expose the public to real harm.

This is not a turf war. This is about patient safety. Improper needle insertion can lead to serious complications: pneumothorax, infection, and worse. Oregon residents deserve medical care from professionals who are fully trained and accountable to the highest standards.

I respectfully urge the legislature to reject HB 3824 unless the language permitting needle insertion is removed. Let us protect the people of Oregon, not put them at risk.