

Submitter: Ashley Ledford

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 Ashley Ledford. I am a licensed acupuncturist from Boston MA, and I am here in opposition to HB 3824, specifically because of the inclusion of “needle insertion” (Page 3, Line 37) in the physical therapy scope of practice. The term refers to dry needling, a technique that uses acupuncture needles to penetrate the skin and stimulate muscle or nerve tissue—functionally equivalent to acupuncture, as defined in Oregon law.

I can't really speak to the rest of the bill, I'm not sure on where each point of it falls under a PTs scope of practice but I know for certain that the use of acupuncture needles and methods does NOT fall under it. Sure we're all trained in anatomy. But this is about professional integrity. I'm not out here taking a 14 hour weekend course in physical therapy and then telling patients that I'm doing something totally different and better than what their PT does. Because that would be a lie. I hope that every PT here understands that when they tell their patients that “dry needling” is not the same thing as acupuncture, they are lying to them.

Under ORS 677.757(1)(a), “acupuncture” is explicitly defined as the stimulation of specific points on the body “by the insertion of needles”. There is no such thing as “dry needling needles”, they're using acupuncture needles to perform an acupuncture technique, when they are not licensed acupuncturists. We have to uphold higher standards within the medical community and this means proper regulation by each of our respective boards.

Our areas of specialization are both so important to patient care and honestly we should be trying to support each other's fields. My business partner is a physical therapist and he would never dream of needling our patients just as I would never be the one in charge of their athletic rehabilitation. I have so much respect for him as a practitioner, he is an incredible PT and doesn't have to resort to undermining another field of medicine in order to support his own. Something for y'all to think about.