

SPIRIT POINT HEALING, INC.

Dr. Rachel S. Strass, D.O.M. L.Ac, Dipl. O.M. (NCCAOM)
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Delegate Shane E. Pendergrass, Chair
Room 241
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

March 8, 2022

Re: HB 1016 – UNFAVORABLE – Health Occupations – Licensed
Athletic Trainers – Dry Needling Registration

Dear Chairwoman Pendergrass and Members of the Committee:

I am contacting you as a Maryland constituent and a licensed acupuncturist. I'm writing in opposition to SB 711 and HB 1016, which would allow athletic trainers to perform dry needling.

There are many reasons why this bill is a bad idea. First, the AMA has publicly stated and acknowledged that dry needling IS acupuncture and must only be performed by licensed acupuncturists. Second, athletic trainers are licensed through the board of physicians, which stated in a public meeting that dry needling is NOT in the scope of an athletic trainer.

Furthermore, acupuncture is a complex system of healthcare which affects body, mind, and spirit simultaneously. It can't be separated into treating muscles separately from organs; or trying to treat digestion but not affect fatigue and stress. Any invasive use of acupuncture needles will affect far more than just a strained or sprained muscle. If athletic trainers want to perform acupuncture, they should go back to school and get a license for acupuncture. It is NOT just another technique or a single skill that can be learned separately from the entire system of medicine.

It would be like letting a baseball umpire be a circuit court judge. They know about following rules and deciding what is or isn't allowed by the rules, but they don't have the right degree or training to apply that knowledge in a court of law. It would be a disaster to allow them to run a court room. And it's the same thing with putting

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a needle into the hands of someone who only knows about muscles and tendons. A needle affects the blood, tissue, lymph, nerves, organ functions, and hormones all at once. And every time it's used to penetrate the body. Using a needle to work out a damaged area of muscle can deplete the entire system and make the patient weaker than they were before the treatment.

For all these reasons, I am asking you to oppose this bill. It's dangerous to the health of Marylanders.

Thank you for your time and attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

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