



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY
HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION COMMITTEE**

February 6, 2026

Finance Chair Pamela Beidle and members of the Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SB 370-State Acupuncture Board--Revisions

Dear Finance Chair Beidle and members of the Finance Committee,

On behalf of the Montgomery County Human Trafficking Prevention Committee (HTPC), I am writing in strong support of SB 370—State Acupuncture Board—Revisions.

The mission of the HTPC is to increase understanding of human trafficking and to develop effective strategies for prevention and response. While SB 370 is a straightforward bill, its passage would have significant and far-reaching implications for public safety, consumer protection, and the prevention of exploitation.

SB 370 clarifies that East Asian “manual therapy”—including practices commonly referred to as acupressure, bodywork, or other forms of East Asian massage—is part of the practice of acupuncture and East Asian medicine and therefore requires proper licensure. The bill also establishes penalties for individuals who employ, assist, or otherwise enable the unlicensed practice of acupuncture and East Asian medical therapies.

Montgomery County recently launched the “Look Before You Book” campaign to educate the public about the differences between legally operating and illegal massage and acupuncture businesses. During recent police inspections, officers found the same “certificate” displayed in nearly every inspected spa, falsely claiming that employees were “certified” to perform acupressure. These certificates are not legitimate and mislead consumers into believing the services being offered are lawful and properly regulated.

Without this statutory clarification, massage and bodywork business owners may continue to hire—and potentially exploit—unqualified individuals to perform acupuncture-related services. This practice undermines licensed and trained professionals, places consumers at risk, and creates conditions that can facilitate labor exploitation and trafficking. It is critical that local authorities have the ability to hold individuals accountable for aiding and abetting the illegal use of acupressure and other East Asian medical therapies. For these reasons, the Montgomery County Human Trafficking Prevention Committee respectfully urges the committee’s support of SB 370.

Sincerely,
Jodi Finkelstein, MSW
Executive Director
Montgomery County Human Trafficking Prevention Committee



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