

Dear Senators and Delegates:

I am writing to you in strong opposition to HB0374. Although I understand the boards concerns regarding human trafficking, I feel like the results of this bill will negatively affect licensed massage therapists with legitimate businesses more than it will help it's intended cause to help reduce criminal activity.

The application of manual therapies related to Eastern medicine is a regulated and professional modality among many practitioners in the massage therapy community. It is a valuable method used with good intentions to facilitate healing within our scope of practice. Removing this modality from our practice will only negatively affect massage therapists and their clients. We have dedicated many hours of continuing education to use and promote these practices safely and effectively.

Furthermore, attempting to classify manual therapies, including pressure with hands or other parts of the body, as "acupuncture" overlaps massage therapists' qualifications. Manual therapies as listed in (F) 1 and (F) 2 of this bill should continue to be regulated and maintained separately within the Board of Chiropractic Examiners. Acupuncture as described in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary is, "an originally Chinese practice of inserting fine needles through the skin at specific points especially to cure disease or relieve pain (as in surgery)".

Criminals using massage store fronts to hide human trafficking are already operating these facilities illegally and this new policy will not change their intentions or actions. Any resources used to prevent and eliminate illegal practices should be put towards law enforcement agencies directly associated with human trafficking as opposed to targeting practitioners and businesses.

Source: [ACUPUNCTURE Definition & Meaning - Merriam-Webster](#)

Sincerely, Jessica Neal, LMT