

Dear Delegates,

I am notifying you that I am in in strong opposition to SB0370 / HB0374. As a licensed massage therapist since it's inception in 2000, licensed nurse since 1973, and an acupressure instructor since 2002 in Maryland, trained in acupressure, Shiatsu and manual therapies in the East Asian tradition, I know they are safe and effective methods provided by trained and certified practitioners, and that the methods are not exclusive to acupuncturists, nor is acupuncture training and licensure necessary to perform the methods. It is by far an extreme overreach to require such extensive training in acupuncture to perform the bodywork methods.

My clients and students have greatly benefited from my ability to provide and teach these therapies. I am extremely disappointed and upset to learn that the Maryland General Assembly is considering a bill which would end my ability to provide these treatments to my clients, provide my knowledge to my students, as well as it being drastically detrimental to my livelihood.

I am aware that after receiving education in Acupressure, Shiatsu, and Manual Therapy, that many practitioners such as Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Nursing Staff, Chiropractors, Estheticians, Spa Practitioners, Certified Acupressure Practitioners, as well as Massage Therapists, perform the Acupressure method and that it is not exclusive to Acupuncturists.

As a massage therapist, I am also aware that acupressure is a part of massage therapy curriculum and is also recognized as continuing education by the National Certification Board for Massage and Bodyworkers, which is recognized by the Maryland Board of Massage.

As a nurse I am aware that acupressure is taught to nurses in continuing education courses and is supported by the American Holistic Nurses Association, The Nurses for Natural Health, The School of Modern Nursing, and approved by CE Broker, and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), as a continuing education course for nurses. The Maryland Board of Nursing recognizes courses approved by ANCC.

Nursing personnel have been a great asset to patients when providing acupressure and we need nurses to continue with their holistic modalities for wholesome well-rounded nursing care.

I am aware this bill came in to effect to stop human trafficking, but this is not the way to enforce this violation. It has to be handled by law enforcement in another manner, without harming legitimate practitioner's livelihoods.

Please strongly oppose this ill-written and disruptive bill.

Thank you, Victoria Goldsten

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See attached support letters from professional organization requesting the continuance or employment for Acupressure Practitioners