



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 11, 2026

**DRAFT Testimony in Support of SB 370/HB 374
State Acupuncture Board – Revisions**

Good Afternoon Madam Chair and fellow members of the House Health Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present **HB 374 State Acupuncture Board - Revisions** for your consideration.

The Board of Acupuncture (“The Board”) regulates the practice of acupuncture and East Asian medicine in the State. The most widely recognized modality of this practice is acupuncture, which is the insertion of needles along meridians in acupoints to positively impact energy flow, a process which addresses a myriad of health conditions.

East Asian medicine focuses on the whole person and includes more than just acupuncture to address the needs of patients. East Asian medicine is a complete restorative system which includes: herbal medicine, moxibustion therapy, dietary therapy, mindful movement a.k.a therapeutic exercise, and manual therapy or bodywork.

Manual therapy or bodywork is an umbrella term for the mind-body therapy that practitioners use to promote and optimize whole-person healing and functioning. It includes forms of East Asian massage (Tui Na) as well as cupping, scraping (Gua Sha), and applying the non-needle therapeutic touch and pressure synonymous with acupuncture, **acupressure**. Acupressure is often used in the practice of East Asian medicine when providing care for pediatric and geriatric populations, and/or with any condition in which the use of needles may not be appropriate.

Acupressure is identical to acupuncture in that it relies on the system of East Asian medical principles and theories. Given this, it is imperative that acupressure be included solely under the scope of practicing the system of East Asian Medicine.

The Board is aware of the perception that licensed Acupuncturists only perform acupuncture, which is the challenge. Licensed Acupuncturists are skilled in the full practice of East Asian medicine including manual therapy/bodywork. Because the Board has learned that this perception has led to the unlicensed practice of acupuncture and East Asian medicine via manual therapy/bodywork. In addition, this inaccurate perception is being used to evade licensure requirements for massage therapy through the Board of Massage Therapy Examiners, which is why these Boards are working collaboratively.

House Bill 374 presents the opportunity to clarify that the Board's regulatory authority extends to manual techniques of Asian bodywork, specifically acupressure. Currently, if an unlicensed individual is found practicing these techniques, the Board's options are limited. The State Acupuncture Board - Revisions will serve as a tool that aims to do the following

1. Provide clarity that manual therapy is body work and that acupressure is one form of East Asian bodywork that requires a license to advertise and practice legally.
2. Prevent bad actors from using acupressure as a business model that does not require State licensure via the Board of Acupuncture and Massage Therapy Examiners.
3. Prevent bad actors from using acupressure as a business model that can exploit employees and customers.
4. To further the Board's ability to enforce practice law by adding sanctions for those that aid and abet the unlicensed practice of acupuncture and East Asian medicine.

HB 374 is a necessary step in protecting Marylanders and ensuring that every person practicing bodywork in our state is properly licensed and held to professional standards.

I respectfully request a **FAVORABLE** report.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. White", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Delegate Jennifer White Holland