



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION of
ACUPUNCTURE and ORIENTAL MEDICINE

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March 8th, 2010
Senator Joseph Crisco
Representative Steve Fontana
Co-Chairs, Insurance & Real Estate Committee
Connecticut General Assembly
Room 2800, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

**RE: SB 392 – AN ACT CONCERNING INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR
ACUPUNCTURE TREATMENTS PROVIDED BY CHIROPRACTORS**

Dear Senator Crisco and Representative Fontana,

I am contacting you as the president of the American Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (AAAOM), the national professional association representing nearly thirty thousand professionals and eight thousand students since 1981. The primary purpose of AAAOM is to promote the profession and practice of acupuncture and Oriental medicine as a distinct primary care field of medicine. Another core responsibility of the AAAOM is to ensure that this medicine is widely accessible and available to patients, particularly low income individuals and families, and other healthcare providers in the US.

The AAAOM works collaboratively with a wide range of national and international organizations, and institutions that oversee, govern, and advance the practice of acupuncture and Oriental medicine. The Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, and the Council of Colleges of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine are some of the more prominent organizations that we work closely with to advance AOM practice in the US.

We respectfully request that the Insurance & Real Estate Committee not support SB 392 (*"AN ACT CONCERNING INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR ACUPUNCTURE TREATMENTS PROVIDED BY CHIROPRACTORS AND THE MINIMUM PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE CARRIED BY CHIROPRACTORS"*)

The proposed mandate for health coverage of acupuncture services performed by chiropractors is

vague and imprecise, and does not take into proper account the inconsistent and limited proficiencies of chiropractors performing acupuncture.

We understand that Connecticut's practice law permits acupuncture in the scope of a chiropractor's license, permissiveness, it should be noted, not granted in Connecticut's neighboring states of Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey and Rhode Island. We are also aware that the Connecticut law specifies no minimum standard of acupuncture education or examination, in effect permitting any licensed chiropractor to perform any acupuncture service. This broad range of lawful acupuncture creates uneven quality of acupuncture care for Connecticut's health care consumers.

Furthermore, the typical health care consumer in Connecticut is not and will not be aware that their chiropractor is not trained and/or potentially credentialed whatsoever in acupuncture. In our view this is not only inadequate but potentially contrary to the goal of offering Connecticut's health care consumers the safest, most effective and highest quality medical alternatives.

The proposed mandate for health coverage of acupuncture services performed by chiropractors would appear to permit any licensed chiropractor to not only perform any acupuncture service, but to also bill the patient's health plan for any acupuncture service, regardless of the practitioner's level of training or proficiency. Please be advised that the act of including an adjunct technique within a lawful scope of license does not therein grant the licensees the skill, safety and insurability to perform said technique.

The Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM) is the only accrediting organization for acupuncture accredited by the United States Department of Education. It is therefore our view that broad permission granted to practitioners who have not met accredited national educational standards is not only misleading to the public but potentially harmful to consumers seeking fully credentialed acupuncture practitioners. Consistent, high quality, safe and cost-effective acupuncture care plays an important role in the overall health care system of Connecticut, and is an important measure for every policy initiative to meet. We feel strongly that the facts prove SB 392 falls short of that measure.

By unanimous resolution of the Board of directors, the AAAOM stands firmly behind the Connecticut Society of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine in strong opposition to Bill SB 392.

Most respectfully submitted,



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AAAOM - President



Michael Jabbour, MS, LAc.
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AAAOM Presidents Council - Chair