

SB 1052 – An Act Concerning the Practice of Acupuncture
Testimony of Craig Kelly, L.Ac., MSAOM, 6 Pine Dr. Ellington, CT 06029
Public Health Committee Public Hearing March 2nd, 2011

To Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter, and Members of the Public Health Committee:

I have been a practicing licensed acupuncturist (L.Ac) in Connecticut for the last 7 years. At the age of 15 I partially tore a tendon in my elbow while playing baseball, and after surgery and nearly two years of weekly physical therapy, I still had pain and limited range-of-motion. Left with further 'exploratory' surgery as my only option, I instead sought out a licensed acupuncturist, hoping it would help in some way. After several visits the pain in my elbow was gone, and I regained complete range-of-motion. I was able to return to sports, and eventually was able to set a UConn school record in the javelin during my time as an undergrad there. It was that experience that opened my eyes to the power and efficiency of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), which eventually became my career path.

After finishing my BS in Dietetics at UConn, I moved cross-country to Seattle on my own, and spent the next 4 years studying TCM year-round at Bastyr University in order to obtain a Masters of Science in Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (MSAOM). From there I moved to Beijing to further my studies and to learn Mandarin. Eventually I moved back to Connecticut to be close to my family, and last year I fulfilled my dream of opening a successful acupuncture clinic.

I mention this because TCM is one of my life's passions, not only for what it has done for me, but for how much I have been able to help other people in the short time I've been practicing. I have dedicated a tremendous amount of time, effort, and resources into learning as much as I can. Whenever I see a patient that 'knows someone who had a bad experience with acupuncture,' I always ask if the treating practitioner was truly qualified to be an acupuncturist, and in almost every case the answer is 'no.' We definitely need more strict, professional standards when defining who really qualifies as an 'acupuncturist.'

In my short time practicing, I have managed to convert several local MDs into acupuncture supporters. They all routinely refer patients to me for various ailments, and in most cases I am able to help them, or at the very least get their medications reduced. One even recently referred her parents to me, which was the greatest compliment I could receive. TCM, when practiced correctly, can compliment modern medicine tremendously well, and I see fantastic potential in the future for using the two together, especially in chronic disease cases.

Please help pass this bill. Those of us with proper training have worked far too hard to let this bill slip by. It will help separate us from those who are unqualified, and will help ensure the quality and integrity of our profession.

Sincerely,

Craig Kelly, L.Ac, MSAOM
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