

Dear Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter, and members of the Public Health Committee.

I am hereby submitting written testimony **opposing SB 353 AN ACT CONCERNING OPIOID ABUSE**. All language pertaining to Acupuncture must be removed.

SB 353 includes language to change the scope of practice of licensed alcohol and drug counselors trained as acupuncture detox specialists (ADS). **The Connecticut Society of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (CSAOM) represents the Licensed Acupuncturists. We have not been contacted for approval of a scope of practice change by the Department of Public Health. ADS are allowed to practice a very limited use of auricular acupuncture due to a clause in the Acupuncture Practice Act. The acupuncturists should be the profession regulating the use of acupuncture, it is not appropriate for another profession to decide what the standards are for the medical application of acupuncture needles.** Several years ago the DPH made it clear that no scope of practice change would be considered without the professions involved agreeing on what changes could be made before the legislative process. That procedure has been ignored.

Expanding the scope of practice of health providers not licensed as Acupuncturists requires careful consideration of need, competency standards, education, examinations and supervision. The training and lack of standards currently used by the acupuncture detox specialists is not designed for use in private practice. They are not Licensed Acupuncturists who are nationally certified and licensed by the state of Connecticut to practice Acupuncture. **Expanding the scope of practice of alcohol and drug counselors to circumvent the standards Connecticut has placed on the practice of Acupuncture is short-sighted and not good legislation.**

**I respectfully request that all language in SB 353 pertaining to the use of acupuncture be removed.** Our intent is not to kill this bill, but to maintain appropriate regulations surrounding the practice of acupuncture, and the procedures that are required to determine scope of practice.

The Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine profession is acting nationally to address the growing concern of opioid abuse and addiction and the benefits of acupuncture as a non-pharmalogical pain treatment option in hospitals and pain clinics. The Oregon Pain Management Commission is including acupuncture in their list of treatment options. **Any discussion of acupuncture in the treatment for pain and opioid use should include Connecticut Licensed Acupuncturists at the policy table.**

I am a licensed acupuncturist and the Past President of the Connecticut Society of Acupuncture & Oriental Medicine (CSAOM). I maintain a private practice in New Canaan, CT. I am also the Connecticut representative of the American Society of Acupuncturists, a federation of state associations, and past Board member of the American Association for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine.

Respectfully yours,

Regina Walsh, LAc, MAc, Dipl. Ac  
Past President

[Connecticut Society of Acupuncture & Oriental Medicine](#)

