

Memorandum:

TO: Members of the Public Health Committee

FROM: Theresa Laggis, RN, BSN, MA, MSN Candidate, Acudetox Specialist, HSMI, Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Candidate

DATE: March 7, 2016

SUBJECT: Written Testimony on Senate Bill 353

Good Afternoon, Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter, and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Theresa Laggis and I thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on SB 353 AN ACT CONCERNING OPIOID ABUSE.

I am a registered nurse and graduate student in the area of psychiatric mental/health currently working as an intern in a private practice working with clients struggling with substance abuse issues. I have been a NADA Acudetox Specialist (ADS) for a year having sought this research based, non-pharmacological adjunctive therapy for use to support clients with stress, anxiety and addiction related conditions. Acudetox has been proven as a safe and effective integrative treatment in recovery from opioid dependence, since this original purpose the role of Acudetox has expanded to other mental health support services with well documented success. NADA Acudetox protocol has been provided to individuals and groups to aid recovery after disasters such as hurricanes, for sleep disorders and anxiety and on college campuses and post-traumatic stress to name just a few. Currently we use Acudetox in our clinic, as both the physician I work with and myself are certified Acudetox specialists, and we have had excellent results in decreasing stress and anxiety and having clients report they feel it is a useful tool in their recovery treatment.

I am in support of section 2h of Senate Bill 353. I am respectfully requesting that the current acupuncture detox law be clarified and expanded to assure that the NADA protocol can benefit all our at-risk populations. Currently in CT, despite their professional credentials and training, many healthcare practitioners cannot offer the NADA protocol because of the limitations of the current law. CT lead the way with the original legislation and I am asking you do the same again by requesting to allow NADA-trained, licensed and/or certified health care providers : RN, APRN, PA, Licensed Addiction Counselors, Family therapists and Social Workers to use the NADA protocol in their independent private practices without supervision. In addition, it is our proposal that a NADA registered trainer may provide indirect supervision to non-licensed ADS performing community auricular acupuncture. The expansion of the current restrictions of an outdated law is essential. The current opioid crisis and rise in stress related disorders could benefit from the expansion of Acudetox services to a variety of settings.

Thank you for examining this very important issue helping to expand the use of Acudetox to our much needed mental health services and community supports in CT.

Respectfully Submitted

Theresa Laggis, RN, BSN, MA, MSN Candidate, Acudetox Specialist, HSMI, Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Candidate