



February 10, 2021

House Committee on Behavioral Health
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Concerns with HB 3045

Madam Chair, Vice-Chair Knopp, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kym Garrett. I am a licensed acupuncturist. I have lived and worked in Bend for more than 15 years and am the owner of Kym Garrett Acupuncture. I currently serve on the Board of Directors of the Oregon Association of Acupuncturists.

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken an incredible toll on individuals and businesses throughout Oregon. In March 2020, acupuncturists were strongly urged by the OMB to cease operations alongside other non-essential businesses. Much of this had to do with our inability to access appropriate PPE, including masks. As we were able to return to our practices in early May 2020, securing the necessary PPE was a challenge due to global supply shortages. We also had a difficult time accessing scientific information for what we needed to do in our practices to keep both ourselves and our patients safe. Not only did we suffer financial losses, but many of our patients were also forced to stop treatment mid-treatment plan, which has had lasting health impacts that they are still dealing with today.

Today, most of us have returned to seeing patients, but the financial losses incurred during the initial shut down hit many of my colleagues hard, and the additional costs of the necessary supplies to keep ourselves, our patients and our staff safe have added additional unforeseen expenses. And while patients have been seeking our services, many of us continue to see fewer patients than we did pre-pandemic. Because many of us are solo practitioners with limited staff, we need additional time between patients to clean and disinfect our treatment space, thus making it necessary to see fewer patients daily.

Despite these challenging circumstances, we are encouraged that the Department of Consumer and Business Services has finalized a rule to add acupuncture to the list of Oregon's Essential Health Benefits for up to 12 visits beginning in 2022. OAA would like to be resource to you as you engage in the important work ahead.

Sincerely,

Kym Garrett, L.Ac.