

Donna Guthery, RN, LAc, FNP-BC, DAOM

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members, for the opportunity to speak about my concerns.

I am Donna Guthery, from Bellaire, Texas. I have been a certified Nurse Practitioner for over 30 years and a Licensed Acupuncturist for over 13 years. Also, I serve proudly on the Texas State Board of Acupuncture Examiners, but am here today in an individual capacity.

I believe the primary concern of healthcare policy and regulation should be quality of care and patient safety.

As a clinician trained *and fully licensed* across two very different systems of care, I have a unique perspective and an appreciation of the depth of knowledge required to bridge both.

And based on my many years of clinical experience, I will tell you without reservation that the way to best assure quality of care and patient safety with acupuncture is to require full licensure.

It is indefensible as a matter of policy, and there can be no assurance of the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Texas, if one set of licensees - Licensed Acupuncturists - are held to an appropriately rigorous set of standards to treat patients using acupuncture needles, while licensees in other professions are allowed to perform the same procedure with no clear statutory authority, no regulatory oversight, and inappropriately low standards of training, or no standards of training at all.

At its June 2016 meeting, the **American Medical Association adopted Resolution 223**, proposed by the **American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation**, which reads:

“RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association recognize dry needling as an invasive procedure and maintain that dry needling should only be performed by practitioners with standard training and familiarity with routine use of needles in their practice, such as licensed medical physicians and licensed acupuncturists.”

And as noted in the proceedings, “Dry needling is indistinguishable from acupuncture, yet physical therapists are using this invasive procedure with as little as 12 hours of training.”

And in a subsequent news release: “Lax regulation and nonexistent standards surround this invasive practice. For patients’ safety, practitioners should meet standards required for acupuncturists and physicians.”

This last statement on the one hand aligns with the high standards set out in our own Texas Acupuncture Act, while on the other unfortunately, the lack of oversight and the regulatory disparities that currently exist around the practice of acupuncture in the State of Texas.

As a nurse practitioner dually licensed in acupuncture, it is my sincere hope that the Legislature - in the interest of quality of care and patient safety - will give serious consideration to these important policy issues.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak.