

February 23, 2021

RE: Bill HF785 by Rep. Mike Freiberg and Rep. Liz Olson - Cover for Acupuncture Services.

Dear whomever it may concern in regards to HF785:

My name is Hannah Anderson, and I am an acupuncture student at Northwestern Health Sciences University. As the secretary, I am writing on behalf of our Student American Society of Acupuncturists (SASA) organization. Our goal as student leaders is to bring fellow students together through advocacy of our profession. We strive to promote the highest standards of professional practice while reaching people of all demographics and socioeconomic statuses, ultimately benefiting public health throughout the state and country. Our mission supports bill HF785, and we hope you will too.

We support HF785 for numerous reasons, but I will list the most pressing:

1. The US prescribes 50 times more opioids than the rest of the world combined. Research consistently shows that acupuncture treats pain, manages chronic pain, and decreases the need for pharmacological interventions including opioids. Minnesota has a great need for viable non-pharmacological pain management options.
2. The Joint Commission (the largest hospital accreditor in the US) recently revised its pain mandate. The 2018 mandate enforces that it's accredited hospitals provide non-pharmacological modalities, including acupuncture, for pain management. Many organizations are supporting acupuncture, but we need your help to increase access to acupuncture through insurance coverage for Minnesotans.
3. Acupuncture is currently serving limited demographics. There are pain management disparities throughout our country, with socioeconomic/demographic factors at the forefront. If all Minnesota insurance plans were to cover acupuncture, we would be able to reach the underserved demographics with the greatest need for treatment.

Minnesota is in need of viable, non-pharmacological pain-management options now more than ever. Please consider supporting HF785. Together we can help heal Minnesota and lead by example for the rest of the United States.

Sincerely,

SASA Leadership Team

Kailee Carlson, Brianne Stamer – Co-presidents

Hannah Anderson – Secretary

Stephen Engelhardt – Treasurer

Sophia Catanoso