

SB 1076

Measure Title: RELATING TO THE USE OF THE DOCTOR OF ACUPUNCTURE TITLE.

Report Title: Acupuncturists; Doctor of Acupuncture Title

Description: Requires acupuncture applicants for the use of the doctor of acupuncture title to complete their doctoral studies from an institution recognized by the United States acupuncture accrediting body or from a foreign institution that is licensed, approved, or accredited by the applicable governmental authority in that respective foreign jurisdiction and also requires applicants for the use of the doctor of acupuncture title who complete their doctoral studies from a doctoral program at an educational institution in a foreign jurisdiction to have their doctoral education credentials evaluated by professional evaluators designated by the Board of Acupuncture.

Companion: [HB845](#)

Package: Gov

Current Referral: CPN

Introducer(s): KIM (Introduced by request of another party)

| <u>Sort by</u> <u>Date</u> | | Status Text |
|---|---|---|
| 1/24/2013 | S | Introduced. |
| 1/24/2013 | S | Passed First Reading. |
| 1/24/2013 | S | Referred to CPN. |
| 1/29/2013 | S | The committee(s) on CPN has scheduled a public hearing on 02-07-13 9:00AM in conference room 229. |

**PRESENTATION OF THE
BOARD OF ACUPUNCTURE**

**TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION**

**TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE
Regular Session of 2013**

Thursday, February 7, 2013
9:00 a.m.

**TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL NO. 1076, RELATING TO THE USE OF THE
DOCTOR OF ACUPUNCTURE TITLE.**

TO THE HONORABLE ROSALYN H. BAKER, Chair,
AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

My name is Michael Howden and I am the Chairperson of the Board of Acupuncture ("Board"). Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of Senate Bill No. 1076, Relating to the Use of the Doctor of Acupuncture Title, which is an Administration bill.

The Board previously met on this bill and wholeheartedly supports the measure which seeks to ensure that Hawaii acupuncture licensees who use the "Doctor of Acupuncture" title or designation, "D.Ac." graduate from an accredited doctoral program in acupuncture and oriental medicine or, in the case of a foreign program, one that is equivalent. The measure would also repeal the Board's authority to approve advanced programs of study. Finally, the bill requires graduates of foreign programs to submit their educational credentials to a board approved and designated professional, at the licensee's expense.

Section 436E-13, HRS, provides that licensees can complete *either* an accredited program *or* a Board approved program as the basis to use "Doctor of

Acupuncture” or “D.Ac.”. Until recently, there was no available accredited doctoral program; thus, the only way that a licensee could meet the requirement would be to apply to the Board for approval of the program the licensee studied. However, in 2002, an accredited doctoral program was developed and is now being offered at over nine U.S. schools. Since 2005, the schools have graduated approximately 145 students. As of 2009, approximately 855 students have enrolled in the accredited program.

The Board has been steadfast in its belief that the accredited doctoral program is the gold standard that licensees, who wish to set themselves apart by calling themselves “Doctor of Acupuncture” or “D.Ac.”, should be required to complete. Accordingly, the Board strongly favors repealing its authority to approve advanced programs of study because it lacks the experience, expertise and resources to do so.

In addition, the Board believes that licensees who attained their doctoral studies from a foreign school should have their school transcripts and curriculum evaluated by credential evaluators, at the licensees own expense. In its experience in reviewing foreign school documents, the Board has found the documents to be confusing, illegible and conflicting. More importantly, the Board is concerned that it lacks the resources and expertise to accurately judge the validity of the documents and school. The Board would utilize the credential evaluation reports as a tool during the application review. Incidentally, in a 2008 legislative initiative, the Board sought similar amendment for foreign school

Testimony on Senate Bill No. 1076
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graduates seeking acupuncture licensure, which the Legislature supported.

For these reasons, the Board strongly supports the bill and asks that the measure be passed out of Committee as is.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 1076.



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Testimony Supporting SB 1076 Relating to Acupuncture Board February 7, 2013

To: Senator Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Senator Brickwood Galuteria, Vice-Chair
Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection (CPN)

Dear Senator Baker and members of CPN committee:

We are writing to **support but have concerns regarding SB 1076** that requires acupuncture applicants for the use of the doctor of acupuncture title to complete their doctoral studies from an institution recognized by the United States acupuncture accrediting body.

The Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM) is the national accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education for the accreditation throughout the United States of first-professional master's degree and professional master's-level certificate and diploma programs in acupuncture and Oriental medicine, and professional post-graduate doctoral programs in acupuncture and in Oriental medicine (DAOM), as well as freestanding institutions and colleges of acupuncture and Oriental medicine that offer such programs (<http://www.acaom.org/>).

SB 1076 does not include the Doctor of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine degree designation "DAOM" which is the current title used extensively by practitioners that have completed their accredited doctoral studies. The DAOM title is the approved designation by the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM). **Please amend this bill to insert the national "DAOM" title.** Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Wai Hoa Low, DAOM, MBA, L.Ac.
President/CEO



HOMAA.org

*hawai'i oriental medicine
& acupuncture association*

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February 5, 2013

To: Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
Senator Brickwood Galuteria, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

RE: Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 1076
Relating to the use of the Doctor of Acupuncture title

Dear Senators,

The HOMAA Board **supports** SB1076's intention to grant Doctor of Acupuncture title based on national educational guidelines and repeal the current route established by the Hawaii Board of Acupuncture.

The Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM) is the national accrediting body for United States acupuncture and Oriental Medicine schools and is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. This body has outlined programs for Master and Doctoral levels, including the Doctor of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (DAOM) degree.

The American Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers International Education Services (AACRAO IES) is a center that provides international education evaluations. Currently, the Hawaii Board of Acupuncture accepts educational evaluations from this association to approve foreign graduates applying for the Hawaii Licensed Acupuncturist title. Foreign graduates should have equal opportunity to be approved for the Doctor of Acupuncture title if his or her training proves equivalent to or exceeds that of the U.S. ACAOM doctoral program requirements.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Christina Kapoathanasis, L.Ac., Dipl.O.M.
Executive Director on behalf of the Hawaii Oriental Medicine and Acupuncture Association

SB1076

Submitted on: 2/5/2013

Testimony for CPN on Feb 7, 2013 09:00AM in Conference Room 229

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Dr Melissa L Yee | Individual | | No |

Comments: I strongly support this bill. Acupuncturists provide an excellent service to the community with an alternative to conventional medicine that often is far superior in quality and results and lack of side effects. Other practitioners who have made the extra effort to earn the doctoral title should be allowed to retain the title of DAc. The most important thing to be concerned about is that we have a board that can take a stand on whether the use of the title is being misused and to determine whether an acupuncturist may have injured or caused harm to a patient and is notified by the board of the possible violation of the terms of his or her license. Thank you. Dr Melissa L Yee