

[Your Name]

[Your Address]

[City, State, ZIP Code]

[Date]

Dear [Representative Name],

I am a licensed acupuncturist Lic # ##### in your district, and I see ##### annually, ###% take Medical.

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding Governor Newsom's proposed 2026-2027 State Budget, which includes the elimination of acupuncture as a Medi-Cal benefit. Facing a \$12 billion state deficit, the Governor's May Revision proposes excluding acupuncture from state-subsidized Medi-Cal services, a cut estimated to save \$5.4 million in 2025-26 and \$13.1 million annually thereafter. This proposal is deeply alarming for our profession and for the hundreds of thousands of patients who depend on this benefit to manage chronic, severe pain.

This is not the first time our community has had to fight for this essential service. The same elimination was proposed in the prior year's budget, and it was only through significant community mobilization that acupuncture was ultimately restored. Year after year, this critical benefit is placed on the chopping block, forcing providers and patients to repeatedly defend access to care that should never be in question.

The California State Senate has made its position clear. SB 944, the Acupuncture Access Act, authored by Senator Scott Wiener, passed the Senate 35-0, and aims to enshrine acupuncture as a protected Medi-Cal benefit, helping safeguard this treatment from ongoing state and federal budget pressures. That unanimous vote reflects broad, bipartisan recognition that acupuncture is not a luxury, it is essential healthcare.

Please do not eliminate acupuncture from Medi-Cal. Your constituents need our services for the following reasons:

- **Opioid Epidemic Solution:** Since 2016, acupuncture under Medi-Cal has provided a vital treatment alternative to the overuse of prescription medications to treat chronic severe pain, helping combat the opioid crisis.
- **Economic Value:** Acupuncture's minimal allocation in the Medi-Cal budget yields significant benefits. Removing it would likely increase the need for more expensive and potentially harmful treatments, raising state healthcare costs.
- **Essential Health Benefit:** Since 2012, acupuncture has been mandated as an essential health benefit under the Affordable Care Act, ensuring acupuncture coverage for patients in California.

Eliminating this benefit would reduce the quality of care for millions and lead to higher long-term costs for the state. I urge you to advocate for retaining acupuncture coverage under Medi-Cal.

Thank you for your attention to this crucial issue. We hope for a favorable resolution that preserves acupuncture coverage for Medi-Cal beneficiaries.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Address