

1 INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2015-189

2
3 REQUESTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND
4 LABOR STUDY THE AUTHORIZATION OF CUPPING THERAPY FOR MASSAGE
5 THERAPISTS.
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7 WHEREAS, during the recent Summer Olympic Games, many of the athletes
8 used cupping therapy; and
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10 WHEREAS, cupping therapy is a medical healing modality that has been
11 applied in Asia, particularly in China, and northern Europe, but is
12 attracting interest due to its use by Olympic athletes; and
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14 WHEREAS, the cups used in cupping therapy can be made of different
15 materials including without limitation bamboo, glass, plastic, or
16 earthenware; and
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18 WHEREAS, during cupping therapy, the air inside the cups contracts to
19 create a partial vacuum and the cups are then applied on the skin over
20 prescribed acupuncture points; and
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22 WHEREAS, cupping therapy creates a suction on the skin that pulls up
23 tissue and actively draws blood and other fluids close to the surface which
24 can be an effective complementary technique when used in conjunction with
25 massage therapy; and
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27 WHEREAS, there are seven (7) major types of cupping therapy with dry
28 cupping being the most commonly used type; and
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30 WHEREAS, several states allow massage therapists to use cupping
31 therapy; and
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33 WHEREAS, under Arkansas law, the practice of massage therapy includes
34 "any hands-on bodywork techniques and procedures rising to the level of the
35 techniques and procedures intended to be regulated under this chapter and not
36 covered under specific licensing laws of other boards"; and

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WHEREAS, the practice of acupuncture and related techniques in Arkansas specifically includes cupping therapy in Arkansas Code § 17-102-102(6)(B); and

WHEREAS, the Department of Health has determined that cupping therapy is part of the practice of acupuncture and requires any person interested in performing cupping therapy to attain an acupuncture license; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Health has instructed licensed massage therapists to cease performing cupping therapy and refrain from providing instruction in cupping therapy; and

WHEREAS, limiting cupping therapy to individuals who hold an acupuncture license severely restricts the access to cupping therapy for the citizens of Arkansas; and

WHEREAS, massage therapists across the nation are currently using cupping therapy safely and efficiently with great success and helping patients receive affordable treatment; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly should pursue efforts to improve access to cupping therapy by using the services of existing healthcare professionals, such as massage therapists, to the fullest extent possible,

NOW THEREFORE,
BE IT PROPOSED BY THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND LABOR OF THE NINETIETH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

THAT the House Committee on Public Health, Welfare, and Labor study the authorization of cupping therapy for massage therapists.

Respectfully submitted,

1 Representative Fredrick J. Love

2 District 29

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5 By: JMB/JMB

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