

January 16, 2026

New Hampshire House Executive Departments and Administration Committee

Dear Chair Layon, Chair Slottje and all distinguished members of the House Executive Departments and Administration Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on HB 1269 which is related to qualifications for the acupuncture profession. My name is Troy Carneal and I am a legislative analyst at the Knee Regulatory Research Center at West Virginia University. This comment is not submitted on behalf of any party or interest group.

I am responsible for researching licensing data for all fifty states as well as the District of Columbia, which includes all qualifications needed to enter around three hundred different occupations and compile this information into our center's database.

We use occupational licensing to ensure professionals are qualified to protect consumers. However, these standards can also be restrictive, preventing aspiring professionals from earning a living. There is evidence that shows licensing restricts about one in five workers. This reduction in workforce limits the access of care for many people. We need to balance patient protection by maintaining adequate standards.

By lowering the requirement from a bachelor's degree to an associate's degree, this bill creates more pathways for qualified individuals to provide acupuncture care to the citizens of New Hampshire, while leaving the specific acupuncture education requirements fully in place. These professionals are still taking the necessary training and classes that give them expertise in this field and thus this change will not lower the quality of acupuncture care for patients.

In summary, removing bachelor's degree requirement for acupuncturist creates more avenues for individuals to get into the profession without putting patients at risk.