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Opposition to AB21 testimony:

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you.

My name is Tom Stewart. I own a small health store in Reno and have been a member of the state board of Oriental medicine in the public seat for 3 years.

In the last legislative session NRS634A.120 was changed. As I read it it's clear to me that the intent of the lawmakers was to require the national exam and a state jurisprudence exam. This seems fair and appropriate.

I'd like to refer to a letter sent to you from Betsy Smith of the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM). This is the national organization who writes and administers the national exam.

She states that NCCAOM's examinations have been judged fair, valid and reliable by the National Organization for Competency Assurance since 1991. This means that NCCAOM has met or exceeded the standards set forth for both psychometric and governance policies and procedures.

The value of NCCAOM's exams is demonstrated by its acceptance in 39 of 41 states that license acupuncture and Oriental medicine. All of these states recognize the financial, administrative and legal burdens associated with the use of a defensible psychometric exam and have elected to use NCCAOM's national exam.

Authors of this bill have expressed concern that the national exam does not include sufficient testing in biomedicine. The fact is that the NCCAOM exam does include questions appropriate to the scope of practice for acupuncture and Oriental medicine. In addition NCCAOM recently implemented a separate module in biomedicine as part of the exam.

They spend 3 million dollars a year developing, maintaining and enforcing their certification programs. For Nevada to engage in the development of an exam like the national would be costly and redundant. It would cost a minimum of \$20,000. This would be impossible for the board to afford considering that there are currently only 36 licensees in the state.

I'd also like to point out that this bill overlooks more important problems with the current law.

1) Inclusion of 3 year master's graduates as entry level with the title licensed acupuncturist (L.Ac).

2) Accuracy of language. In the current law, section 634A.120(1)(a) states that the national exam must be taken in "Oriental medicine". This term is a misnomer. A national exam defined as "Oriental medicine" does not exist. The National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM) gives three certification exams: 1) Acupuncture 2) Chinese herbology, and 3) Asian bodywork Therapy (ABT).

3) Prevent discrimination. In the current law section 140(1)(b) reads that an applicant must have a bachelor's degree from the United States. This discriminates against the very people who founded the profession: Asians and other foreign students schooled in their respective countries.