

**Jan Burkhard-Catlin Statement
to Joint Legislative APO Committee**

Good morning. My name is Jan Burkhard-Catlin. I am 28 years old. I am one of the principal dancers with the Carolina Ballet, a professional ballet company based here in Raleigh.

My husband and I live in Raleigh, and we are expecting our first child. Our baby girl is due on August 5th.

Senator Wells asked if I would be willing to come speak with you today. At first, I wasn't sure I could talk to a room full of strangers about my health issues. But I ultimately agreed because I feel strongly that this Committee has a right to know what the Acupuncture Board is trying to do to patients like me.

The truth is that there are thousands of patients like me who need a certain kind of healthcare treatment, and our access to that treatment is under attack by the Acupuncture Board.

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Because I am a professional ballet dancer, my physical health and well-being are critical to my job. We perform about 80 shows every year. Our training and performances are intense. They put serious physical demands on our bodies.

When we rehearse and perform, we push our bodies to their physical limits. We have demanding performance and training schedules, hours of intense physical training, and movements that would be difficult—if not impossible—for most professional athletes.

In addition, the stages that we perform on and rehearse on are made of hard material. This also puts a lot of stress on our bodies.

All of this can cause serious health issues, but we are fortunate to have an effective healthcare treatment for the pain. That treatment is called dry needling.

Dry needling is a type of physical therapy where needles are inserted into bands in muscles to relieve pain or other problems. On a regular basis, I receive dry needling treatments from Dr. Elizabeth Henry, a physical therapist affiliated with the Carolina Ballet.

The relief I get from dry needling is immediate and effective—much more so than from other healthcare treatments. It targets the specific muscles that give me pain or tension, and it allows me to heal so I can get back to training and performing more quickly. Dry needling is critical to my professional success.

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Unfortunately, a few years ago, Dr. Henry received a cease-and-desist letter from the Acupuncture Board. The cease-and-desist letter ordered her to stop providing dry needling treatments to patients like me. When Dr. Henry refused to stop treating patients like me who need dry needling, the Acupuncture Board filed a lawsuit against her. I'm told that lawsuit is ongoing.

The acupuncturists on the Acupuncture Board say that instead of getting dry needling, patients like me should get acupuncture. Acupuncture is completely different from the dry needling I get from Dr. Henry. I ought to know: I've had acupuncture in the past. ~~It doesn't help with the pain that comes from doing my job.~~ ^{have sought out} I ~~both~~ both treatments for different reasons.

I am concerned that the Acupuncture Board is going to eliminate my access to ^{the type of} ~~this~~ healthcare treatment that I desperately need. I had no idea
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that something like this could happen here in North Carolina. I couldn't imagine that a government agency would actually try to tell patients like me what kinds of pain treatments we can and can't get. As a patient, I thought the law gave me the right to make those decisions for myself.

As I'm sure you do, I care deeply about being able to have access to the healthcare I need. I care about it so much that I am willing to do whatever it takes to be sure that I can continue ~~to get~~ ^{getting} dry needling.

Unfortunately, when the Acupuncture Board wouldn't stop its attacks, I was forced to file a lawsuit asking the courts to stop the Acupuncture Board from trying to block our access to care. I'm not the only patient in that lawsuit. My colleague at the Carolina Ballet, Lindsay Purrington, also joined me in the lawsuit. She has the same concerns I do.

That lawsuit is ongoing right now, which is why—as I'm sure you can understand—I can't answer questions. But I wanted to accept Senator Wells' invitation to come here today because I feel strongly that this Committee has a right to know what the Acupuncture Board is doing.

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All of this is why patients like me were pleased to learn that the legislature has its own reasons for considering whether to do away with the Acupuncture Board. Given what thousands of patients like me are going through right now with the Acupuncture Board, I strongly support this bill.

Thank you again for allowing me to speak with you today. I appreciate your time, your concern, and what I hope will be your willingness to support this bill.