

Submitter: Shimila Keenum
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2143
April 22, 2025
Re: Support for HB2143 – Expanding Access to the 5 Needle Protocol (5NP)

Dear Chair Patterson, Vice Chair Hayden, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Shimila Keenum, and I am writing from Virginia in strong support of HB2143. I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Registered Nurse, and trainer in the 5 Needle Protocol (5NP). I had the privilege of supporting Virginia's successful 2024 legislation expanding access to this safe, trauma-informed wellness modality. Oregon is now poised to do the same — and I respectfully urge your support.

5NP is a simple yet powerful protocol that helps regulate the nervous system, reduce stress, and support emotional balance — especially for individuals navigating addiction, trauma, incarceration, or housing instability. As a therapist, I've seen how profoundly this intervention can complement mental health care and create new access points for healing in underserved communities.

One story that stays with me involves a pregnant client in her third trimester who had lived with chronic hypertension since adolescence. She had also experienced complex trauma and a period of incarceration and was seeking holistic support in her recovery. Despite medication, her blood pressure remained elevated. Through our weekly work together — combining psychotherapy with the 5 Needle Protocol — she began reporting more energy, a deeper sense of calm, and an increased ability to manage daily stress without feeling overwhelmed. Her emotional “window of tolerance” widened — she could stay more grounded, even during difficult moments. After about a month, her OB-GYN was surprised to see her blood pressure return to a normal range. When asked what had changed, she remembered the acupuncture and was encouraged to continue. She later delivered a healthy baby without complications.

This personal experience is supported by clinical research. A 2017 peer-reviewed study published in Behavioral Sciences found that individuals receiving the 5 Needle Protocol alongside traditional treatment showed significant improvements in quality of life, mood, and energy, as well as reduced alcohol and tobacco use and greater likelihood of employment upon discharge. These benefits were especially notable among individuals with criminal histories or positive drug tests at intake — populations often facing the greatest barriers to recovery (Carter et al., 2017).

HB2143 provides a responsible, well-structured pathway to broaden access by allowing trained non-acupuncturist providers to deliver this care — without diminishing the vital role of licensed acupuncturists. As behavioral health systems across the country continue to face rising demands, this bill offers a cost-effective, community-based tool to support Oregon's most impacted populations.

Thank you for your time, your leadership, and your commitment to the well-being of Oregon's communities. I strongly urge you to pass HB2143.

Warmly,
Shimila Keenum, LCSW, RN
5NP Trainer
Amherst, VA

Carter, K., Olshan-Perlmutter, M., Marx, J., Martini, J. F., & Cairns, S. B. (2017). NADA Ear Acupuncture: An Adjunctive Therapy to Improve and Maintain Positive Outcomes in Substance Abuse Treatment. *Behavioral Sciences*, 7(2), 37.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/bs7020037>