



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION of
ACUPUNCTURE *and* ORIENTAL MEDICINE

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June 1, 2009

Coalition for Patient Rights™ (CPR)
C/O Account Director, Jennifer Weissblum
1025 Vermont Avenue, Northwest, Suite 1200
Washington, D.C. 20005

Greetings:

The American Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (AAAOM) strongly supports the [Coalition for Patient's Rights™](#) (CPR) efforts to defend a patient's access to all licensed health care providers. The AAAOM is expressly concerned about initiatives which limit patients' access to the services of licensed acupuncturists.

The AAAOM's mission is to promote excellence and integrity in the professional practice of acupuncture and Oriental medicine (AOM) to enhance public health and well-being. AOM is an original form of holistic medicine, which includes acupuncture, Asian herbal medicine, medical massage, diet modifications, and breathing and movement therapies. Acupuncture is one of the oldest, most commonly used medical procedures in the world. Originating in China more than 2,500 years ago, acupuncture gained the attention of the American public in [1971](#), during the Nixon Administration, when James Reston visited China and received post-operative treatment through acupuncture. The great degree of patient and physician acceptance of acupuncture in the United States is due in part to the rigorous credentialing and examination processes that practitioners are required to complete for licensure. To understand more about AOM, we invite you to read our recently published document, [AOM in the U.S.](#)

As a member of the CPR since [2006](#), the AAAOM feels that society and the patient community at-large have the right to access and choose the medical modality they prefer for treatment. The CPR coalition of more than [35 organizations](#) offers access to more than three million licensed and certified healthcare professionals. Not only does the CPR address the specific practice issues that pose threats by the AMA to the member organizations, but it also provides public access to comprehensive healthcare choices. CPR members believe that patient health is vastly improved through an integrative medical approach where the broader range of healthcare providers can provide added benefits lacking in the MD community alone—personalized care, specialty services, greater accessibility and increased affordability.

We value the inter-professional relationships that have formed as a result of our [CPR](#) activities. As we work alongside each other, we grow significantly in the depth of understanding of the vast range of competent medical services that are available through access to non-MD providers. We respect and embrace the *full* plurality of practices within medicine. The AAAOM is proud to be a member of the [CPR](#); we plan and look forward to continuing our dedication of resources and time to this important collaborative work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rebekah J. Christensen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "R".

Rebekah Christensen
AAAOM Executive Director