



LAWS & LEGISLATION

Milestone Achieved! Bipartisan Support for H.R. 4803

Editorial Staff

A major milestone in the legislative journey of H.R. 4803 has been realized: U.S. House member Brian Fitzpatrick (R-Pa.) has co-sponsored the act – the first Republican member of Congress to do so.

The significance of Rep. Fitzpatrick's co-sponsorship is that the legislation now enjoys bipartisan support. Molly Giammarco, senior manager of policy & government relations of the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM), explained the significance of the milestone:

"The viability of any Congressional bill is significantly enhanced when it has bipartisan support," she said. "Access to acupuncturists is not a political issue, which is why it's so important to obtain support from both Democratic and Republican members of Congress. H.R. 4803 now has bipartisan support, which will generate additional momentum for the bill. We look forward to obtaining more Congressional support for our Medicare-recognition effort."



As of press time, H.R. 4803 had 10 co-sponsors (nine Democrats, one Republican) in addition to primary sponsor Judy Chu (D-Calif.). Rep. Fitzpatrick joins the following House members supporting the legislation:

- Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.)
- Barbara Lee (D-Calif.)
- Grace Meng (D-N.Y.)
- Grace Napolitano (D-Calif.)
- Joe Neguse (D-Colo.)
- Elanor Norton (D-D.C.)
- Jimmy Panetta (D-Calif.)
- Chellie Pingree (D-Maine)
- Thomas Suozzi (D-N.Y.)

The Acupuncture for Our Seniors Act was introduced in the House (117th Congress, 2021-2023) on July 29, 2021 by Rep. Chu. It would "amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide coverage for acupuncturist services under the Medicare program" specifically "furnished by a qualified acupuncturist ... and such services and supplies furnished as an incident to services furnished by the qualified acupuncturist, as the qualified acupuncturist is legally authorized to perform under State law."

The act defines a "qualified acupuncturist" for Medicare purposes as "an individual who is licensed as an acupuncturist by a State or, in the case of an individual in a State that does not provide for such licensure, meets such criteria (such as certification through an appropriate nationally recognized certification authority for acupuncturists) as the Secretary may specify."

You can track H.R. 4803's progress through the U.S. House and check on updated co-sponsor totals at www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr4803.

