

August 30, 2026

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1949 (Lee) Medi-Cal: Acupuncture treatments
Request for Signature – Los Angeles Acupuncture Clinic

Dear Governor Newsom,

I write to you today on behalf of **Los Angeles Acupuncture Clinic** to request your signature on AB 1949 which establishes a clear, designated annual visit allowance for acupuncture services under the Medi-Cal program.

Acupuncture is a safe, evidence-informed, and cost-effective treatment modality that plays a vital role in managing chronic pain, musculoskeletal conditions, stress-related disorders, and behavioral health challenges. For many Medi-Cal beneficiaries, acupuncture offers a non-pharmacological option that can reduce reliance on opioid medications and other higher-cost interventions, while improving function and overall quality of life.

Under the current utilization structure, acupuncture visits are effectively constrained by a two-visits-per-month framework. In practice, this can limit a beneficiary's ability to access acupuncture treatment during a given month if other covered services are used within that same timeframe, unless additional services are authorized based on medical necessity. This structure creates unintended barriers to care, disrupts continuity of treatment, and imposes administrative burdens on patients and providers alike.

This legislation addresses this issue in a balanced and thoughtful manner by establishing a clearly defined annual visit allotment for acupuncture services—while preserving the department's authority to approve additional visits when medically necessary. By doing so, the bill allows treating practitioners to develop clinically appropriate treatment plans that reflect patient need rather than arbitrary monthly constraints.

Providing predictable access to acupuncture services supports preventive care, early intervention, and whole-person treatment strategies. It can help reduce emergency department utilization, lower long-term health care costs, and improve patient outcomes—particularly for vulnerable populations who rely on Medi-Cal as their primary source of coverage.

This measure represents a practical policy refinement that enhances access to a proven, cost-effective therapy while maintaining appropriate utilization oversight. For these reasons, we respectfully request your signature on AB 1949.

Sincerely,

John Lee
CEO
Los Angeles Acupuncture Clinic