

Opposition to House Bill 2493

I am a Reiki practitioner in public practice in Oregon for over 20 years. I'm a former Board Member of the Northwest Reiki Gathering, which has been in existence for over 30 years. I've also a member for over 20 years of The Reiki Alliance, an international group of Reiki Masters, and have served on its Board. I object to this proposed legislation on the following grounds.

HB 2493 Premise Is Flawed

Section 18, states this act is "...necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety," and its title declares an emergency (*Relating to alternative well-being care; declaring an emergency*). At the same time, the bill admits Oregonians have and continue to use "alternative well being care services" and that "unlicensed alternative therapy practitioners...provide valuable services to Oregonians." The bill provides no evidence to support the claim of an emergency. It is a contradiction to declare an emergency without evidence and then propose "voluntary" registration as a cure to an imagined problem not shared by the citizenry.

Proposed Cure Worse Than Undocumented "Problem"

1. A similar bill was introduced in 2017 and was tabled because there was a huge outcry against it. Oregonians have many more pressing genuine needs for legislators to address.
2. The bill lumps too many professions that have no relationship with each other into one category and contains no provision to include providers from all those modalities on the proposed governing boards.
3. The bureaucracy to mandate rules and control the many modalities will inhibit small business owners of alternative and complementary services during difficult times, while enriching the "certifiers" who get jobs making the rules. Taxpayers end up paying the cost.
4. The bill threatens a shift from "voluntary" registration to mandatory state over-regulation of modalities, many of which already have their own codes of ethics and self-regulating organizations. Regulation, fees, and certification do not inhibit unethical practitioners. They will, however, negatively impact sole proprietors and small business owners already complying with good business practices, through increased costs and administrative demands.
5. The bill takes away the right of Oregonians to choose how to address their health needs.

A Better Approach: Safe Harbor Exemption

I support an approach used by 11 other states as their legislation model. Its formal name is The Oregon Consumer Access and Right to Practice Complementary and Alternative Health Care Act, known as the Safe Harbor Exemption, for short. Practitioners need to stay within its guidelines, including disclosures about what training and experience a practitioner has. If a practitioner violates these, then there is legal recourse with laws that are already in place.

I urge you to oppose this bill. Thank you.