

I oppose HB 2493. Although apparently well-intentioned, it will do more harm than good. Given the fact proposed legislation is based on a supposed “emergency,” I do not trust that requirements will remain voluntary.

I am a believer in complementary health care. If I have a problem, I want access to the latest medical technology, plus other low-tech, non-medical modalities I would choose. The proposed legislation threatens Oregonians’ ability to benefit from and practice simple, non-invasive healing modes that are generally recognized as harmless. These modalities can work hand-in-hand with medical treatments and are especially valuable when medical options have been exhausted.

I have practiced Reiki since 2004, when I needed a way to stay healthy in a high-stress corporate job. It is simple, relaxing, and non-invasive. Anyone can learn to do it, and most people have some innate ability. If you have ever spontaneously put your hand on your forehead or other body part that hurts, you were probably doing a form of Reiki. I got a painful bleeding scratch from a sticker bush during a hike yesterday. I did Reiki on it, and it is almost gone. Reiki has helped my friends and family, and their pets immeasurably. My husband had a life-threatening head injury and was in a coma last year. He received excellent medical care, plus lots of Reiki and has now completely recovered.

This legislation is so broad, vague, and ill-defined it is creating an emergency rather than fixing one. The implication that the State could craft a consistent regulatory approach to hundreds of widely disparate practices reveals a stunning lack of subject matter understanding. The regulatory structure that is being outlined will have a chilling effect on complementary modalities. Many practitioners offer their services on a low cost or volunteer basis and those who cannot deal with the extra expense and administration are likely to cease practicing. This helps no one.

I have volunteered as a Reiki practitioner in medical and hospital settings, working with nurses and other medical staff. Feedback from staff and patients has been overwhelmingly positive, commonly citing reduced pain, stress release, and increased relaxation. The organizations I have worked with have robust training procedures and impeccable ethical standards. The proposed legislation would do nothing to improve these programs and would in fact cause harm to them. The additional requirements imposed upon volunteer agencies would create an administrative burden and discourage volunteer recruitment. Particularly troubling is the suggestion that practitioners would become “mandatory reporters,” for the State of Oregon. Should this come to pass, I would think twice about volunteering.

This proposed legislation creates more problems than solutions and more questions than answers. Among the questions:

- 1) What is the “emergency” and how will this legislation address it?
- 2) What is the problem and how will this legislation solve it?
- 3) What are the objectives and how will success be measured?
- 4) How does the State of Oregon propose to craft a uniform approach to hundreds of disparate practices?

Please cancel HB 2493. Susan Florentino