

Dear Legislators,

While I appreciate your concern for Oregonians with regard to Complimentary and Alternative health care practices, a concern that I share, I have several serious concerns about HB 2394:

- A similar bill was introduced in 2017 and was tabled because there was a huge outcry against it — because we don't want or need more regulations and an oversight board.

- How exactly is this situation an emergency? No documentation has been provided here. With COVID-19, a rising crisis of unhoused citizens, unemployment, chronic wildfires and drought, systemic oppression, and any number of potentially life-threatening situations, this hardly seems like the health care *emergency* that this bill claims.

- Complementary and alternative healers *don't practice medicine or mental health counseling*. That's the entire point of it. That's why it's *alternative*. Therefore it should not be regulated in the same way as medical and mental that counseling is regulated by professional boards. Most of us spend a great deal of time training initially and also spend a lot of time in continuing education.

- It is not in an alternative healthcare provider's job description to assess, diagnose or treat a mental, emotional, or behavioral disorder.

- This bill takes away the right of Oregonians to choose their own healthcare providers. My own health and wellbeing has only suffered under traditional care. My only relief from multiple concerns comes from alternative care providers. This bill has the potential to limit what help I have available, and I can't even imagine what my life would be like without this option.

- The only reason that these licensed care providers are affordable for most citizens is due to insurance offset. How will Oregon compensate its citizens if these practitioners are no longer affordable because of the cost of additional (and unnecessary) training and registration costs?

- The definition of alternative well-being provider is too vague. Care givers, certain types of ministries, and other professions fall under the given definition.

- A life coach and a Reiki practitioner are apples and oranges. This doesn't make sense. Too many professions that have no relationship with each other have been lumped together into one category. And most of these practices have their own codes of ethics to begin with.

- Alternative health care providers have no say as to who is to govern them, and there is no provision to put alternative healthcare providers on the governing boards.

- What is the advantage to practitioners to join the registry? This seems like an attempt for therapists to corner the market on what “wellbeing” entails.

- Eleven other states have introduced “Safe Harbor Exemptions,” which have guidelines that practitioners need to stay within and includes disclosure about what training and experience a practitioner has. If a practice/practitioner violates these, then there is legal recourse with laws that already are in place. Several other states are introducing or preparing to introduce this.

- It seems this bill in effect would discriminate against any religious practices that are nonchristian. This bill would severely limit Oregonians access to spiritual practices and their right to freedom in how they choose to practice their faith, and discriminates against smaller religions and spiritual practices by holding alternative practitioners to a different standard than priests, rabbis, etc. Isn't this illegal?

-Many of these practices are, or are based in, practices that have been in use for centuries, if not thousands of years, and have not required legislation.

Please do not implement this bill.

Sincerely,  
~Darcy Molloy