

I am a Black trans resident of Portland and submit this testimony as both a regular client and practitioner whose work is included in the broad category of alternative therapies. Since 2019, I have owned and operated Blooming Fire Healing through which I offer Reiki, Intuitive energy work, and tarot services. My diverse training spans over 14 years of combined instruction, volunteer work, and both personal and professional practice.

This bill has the potential to disrupt, destabilize, and cause undue hardship for both practitioners who offer the cited services and their clients. I have relied on my business to keep me afloat during the global pandemic. And believe me, this has been tenuous. Like many practitioners who have supported community wellness for years, I have done my best to make services accessible in support of Black, Indigenous and People of Color as well as the LGBTQIA2+ communities. I have been thankful to receive free or low-cost support over the past year. To open the door to mandatory fees for our work does more than reduce our income, it could ultimately reduce sliding scale or supported options for those who could benefit most.

In addition to the financial impact proposed in this bill, there is no clear breakdown of regulations within this incredibly broad range of services. This strikes me as a blanket that is being tossed over current practitioners with little to consideration for the way we operate. Imposing this type of regulation does not translate well to many of the modalities under the heading. Frankly, it is an approach that is generated from a white, capitalist, colonizer stance, rather than a relational understanding. One size does not fit all.

Like many in my networks who offer holistic healing services, sound healing, shamanic modalities, etc which fall under the heading of alternative therapies, we have been trained and/or initiated into our work by teachers and elders. After being set to the task of fulfilling a role as a healer within our communities it is often necessary to cultivate our relationship with our modality on our own. It is our personal engagement with the work that allows us to become effective healers. To be direct (and risk coming across as esoteric), you cannot regulate spirit--which guides many of us in the skillful completion of this work.

This process is not something that can be objectively evaluated or shoehorned into systems of regulation. Some of us have attended schools to learn our work, some have learned traditionally at the feet of our grandmothers. Both are absolutely valid and should be respected. However, without a culturally-competent approach to those of us who do this work--especially BIPOC practitioners--this does nothing but create new hurdles rather than helping anyone.

Thank you for your time and attention.

-Given Q Davis