

Testimony for Committee on Behavioral Health

Regarding HB2493

I am a 70 year old who has spent my life, half of it in the Corvallis, OR area, learning and using alternative health and well-being modalities for myself and for others. I have helped change many lives for the better and have had my life positively impacted by unregulated alternative practitioners, some highly trained, others not as much, and some perhaps frauds. Many of my own clients have been physicians, nurses, psychotherapists and psychiatrists, yet I have no legal credentials. They sought me out based on testimony from colleagues.

I have also seen how many trained and licensed practitioners have done great damage because of their inherent lack of maturity and deeper personal issues, which generally go undetected by laws that regulate their fields.

There are many, many health and healing modalities that are impossible to measure and evaluate by any standard medical rubric because they rely on the wisdom and intuitive depth of the practitioners and clients. Some are ancient. Some are new.

Further, practitioners' skills range from poor to brilliant, and are determined by so much more than training. Many of the best practitioners are simply gifted naturally from birth or life experience with intuitive abilities that material scientists cannot measure. Some scientists cannot even perceive them. People like us have been around for thousands of years, improving people's lives in ways that the recipients of our services are able to absolutely know and appreciate, yet third parties would not have a clue.

Are there quacks and amateurs who can be harmful to people? Yes, always have been. But no institution is capable of discerning these things. Education, wisdom and word of mouth is what people must rely on. Laws restricting these kinds of services come out of ignorance, fear and cultural bias. Perhaps courses in professional ethics are the best we can do.

Please do not support this bill. It would create much more harm than the harm it portends to prevent.

Barry Kerr