

To: Oregon House Committee on Behavioral Health

From: Colleen Benelli, Reiki Lifestyle

**Re: Opposition to House Bill 2493**

May 9, 2021

Dear Committee Members,

I ask you to **please oppose House Bill 2493**. In the interest of your time, I have posed 12 questions for you to consider. This bill has unintentional (I assume) religious discrimination and systemic racism. It affects diverse communities. Please carefully consider this action.

My name is **Colleen Benelli**. I am a **Reiki Master and Shamanic practitioner** and owner of Reiki Lifestyle. I have been a full-time practitioner and teacher of both modalities for over 20 years. I am an expert in my field. I am the Director of Teacher Training for the International Center for Reiki Training and on the Council for the LightSong School of Shamanic Studies. I have extensive training and skill in both professions. I have been instrumental in building training programs for both Reiki and Shamanism. I have a global Reiki practice. My podcast, Reiki Lifestyle, generates around 30,000 downloads per month. My community of peers, clients and students is remarkably diverse. The field is predominately women of every race, sexual orientation, culture, spirituality and religious practices. There is a high percentage of higher education in students who become Reiki or Shamanic practitioners. Practitioners include every profession.

**1. Complimentary vs. Alternative Therapy**

Reiki is defined as a “Japanese stress reduction technique.” Both Reiki and Shamanism are complimentary practices. They do not replace medical or mental health therapies. In my experience, most practitioners of what you are referring to as alternative are complimentary practitioners. We do not diagnose or claim to have medical or mental health cures. We have established Codes of Ethics and Standards of Practice and scope of practice we adhere to.

2. **Why is this an emergency?** Where is the evidence of harm? What is the rush?
3. Where is the **input from stakeholders?**
4. **Is HB 2493 constitutional?** Is it insidious racism and unintentional discrimination against spiritual practices? Do you need to **do more research** from experts in these fields?
5. Does HB 2493 have **unintentional bias** toward Western medicine and Christian healing practices?
6. Are you aware of the dominant population of spiritual practitioners and clients?
  - a. **Native Americans, women, BIPOC, LGBTQ, people with disabilities**, various religious practitioners (laying on of hands for healing is ancient), sight impaired.
7. Are you aware that many hospitals, medical, hospice, mental health facilities consider Reiki and other modalities as part of their **Integrative Medicine**, Mind Body, and Spiritual Care Departments?
8. Are you aware that complimentary modalities are often part of wellness care in **women’s shelters, domestic abuse care, veterans and PTSD**, addiction care to name a few?

9. **Who determines the Standards of Practice?** What are their **qualifications?** Are they required to consult with experts in the various alternative therapy practitioner's modalities?
10. **Who is the private company** who will run this registry, what are their **qualifications** to determine our Standards of Practice, investigations for harm, and disciplinary actions?
11. Who determines the **fees to register?** Does the cost **negatively impact marginalized communities** and women's small businesses?
12. Why is the language in **HB 2493 so vague?**
  - a. This bill is so vague, it allows the legislature to make unexpected changes at the whim of whomever is in charge. It leaves practitioners unprotected from unfounded claims and unreasonable laws.

Please do more research on this bill and its unintended consequences. If it moves forward, our communities, your constituents, will mobilize to provide information with good reasons to oppose the bill.

Thank you for your time and work during these difficult times.

Sincere Regards,

Colleen Benelli LRMT, Sh.d, Director of Teacher Training ICRT, Council Member, LightSong School of Shamanic Practitioners.