

My name is Elisabeth Contadino and I live in Cincinnati. About 20 years ago, after working for many years as a Licensed Independent Social Worker, I recognized the importance of the relationship between mind and body. I felt that the way I was working was incomplete without somehow addressing that relationship in a deeper and more integrated way. I then decided that I wanted to practice movement education, commonly referred to as somatic education, and was told that I would need to become licensed as a massage therapist. So that is what I did. While massage therapy was interesting, it was not what I wanted to do and is not what I am doing. After getting my massage therapy license, I went on to study several specific modalities including Trager Approach, which is what I primarily practice with my clients.

I will not repeat the information that you are getting from other written and spoken testimonies requesting the inclusion of an exemption for practitioners of other modalities that use touch but are not massage therapists. These modalities that use touch have formed professional organizations. While most of the organizations have been in existence for at least 40 years their membership numbers are very small in comparison with that of the American Massage Therapy Association.

I want to share with you the importance of professional communities for practitioners and students of these modalities that use touch. Most of us are in solo private practices. We make a conscious effort to know each other, learn from each other, and share with each other. Another big part of what makes these organizations so important is that a large portion of their memberships are made up of people who developed expertise and experience in a wide variety of fields prior to becoming Trager, Feldenkrais, Alexander or some other practitioner who uses touch. Their varied contributions have made it possible for these modalities to continually evolve and refine themselves. They attract people who question themselves and their clients, are creative, and contribute to the collective knowledge of those who practice their modality. There are also many instances of the sharing of knowledge with those who practice other modalities that utilize touch.

House Bill 81, without an exemption for these practitioners, would effectively hurt the Trager community in OH as well as the communities of other modalities. Please provide an exclusion in House Bill 81 that will preserve the integrity of our professional communities.

Thank you for listening to me.

Sincerely,  
Elisabeth Contadino