

Joan Taylor

I am writing on behalf of Practitioners of the Anat Baniel Method of Neuromovement (ABMNM). I am a certified practitioner of ABMNM along with three others in the state of Ohio. HB 81 could affect our right to practice our method of somatic education.

We use movement and attention to bring about increased awareness and improved functioning through experiential learning. Since HB 81 is intended to regulate the practice of massage therapy, we request that the bill be amended, so it is clear that it does not apply to ABMNM teachers and others who do not practice massage therapy.

We understand that it is important to update the massage therapy licensure requirements in Ohio to combat criminal activity that is taking place under the guise of legitimate massage therapy. However, if the proposed definition of massage therapy is interpreted to apply to the practice of ABMNM, it would impose unfair and unnecessary requirements on our certified teachers, whose training and practice is completely different than that of massage therapists. Furthermore, there has been no allegation of criminal activity taking place in Ohio under the guise of the practice of ABMNM.

Therefore, I request that Section 1 of the bill be amended by adding an exemption to Sec. 4731.15 (F) of the Revised Code, for persons who:

- (a) use touch, words, and directed movement to deepen awareness of existing patterns of movement as well as to suggest new possibilities of movement; and
- (b) are recognized by or meet the established standards of either a professional organization or credentialing body that represents or certifies the respective practice based on a minimum level of training, demonstration of competency, and adherence to ethical standards.

Similar amendments have been supported by the US Trager Association, the International Somatic Movement Education and Therapy Association, and the Biodynamic Craniosacral Therapy Association of North America, and similar language has been adopted in other states, with support of the American Massage Therapy Association and other members of the Federation of Therapeutic Massage, Bodywork and Somatic Practice Organizations.

ABMNM is effective for those seeking to improve posture, movement and function. It is held in high regard by professionals in other fields, and has been the subject of extensive research. ABMNM lessons are used by children, seniors, athletes, musicians and people with special needs and neurological conditions. Some lessons include gentle, non-invasive, and non-corrective touch, to guide attention and promote learning. (See anatbanielmethod.com)

Massage licensure requirements are not appropriate for ABMNM teachers because it is an educational system and is not massage. It does not pose a risk to public safety. Certified teachers have undertaken hundreds of hours of specialized training that is completely different from the curriculum for massage therapy.

Thank you for considering my request to amend HB 81. Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,
Joan Taylor
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