

Testimony of Traci Kraft

Committee of Commerce and Labor

Re: House Bill 81 (S 55)

Opposition to Proposed Changes and Amendments to Ohio Revised Code Regarding Laws Governing Massage Establishments and Massage Therapy.

May 25, 2021

Chair Stein, Representatives Plumber, Manchester, Riedel LaRe, Miller J., Young T., Cross, Lanese, White Carfagna Richardson and honorable committee members;

Thank you for allowing me to provide opponent testimony for House Bill 81. My name is Traci Kraft. I am the mother of a profoundly disabled child. My daughter was born with a rare brain malformation that significantly affects her cognitive and physical abilities. Over the years, my husband and I have sought multiple modes of treatments and therapies, both conventional and alternative, to help her gain as much function and independence as possible.

The most powerful and enabling therapy she has received is Somatic Education namely the Feldenkrais. I can, without a doubt, credit this method for my child's ability to sit, walk, stand and move independently while others with the exact same condition remain bound to their wheelchairs. The continued practice of Somatic Education is critical for the maintenance of her abilities and thus the maintenance of her health and independence. Because my daughter receives both massage therapy and Feldenkrais lessons therefore I can attest to the fact that they are absolutely not the same.

I do not support this bill, as it is written, and believe it can potentially affect my child's access to Somatic Education if Feldenkrais and other Somatic practitioners are unduly burdened with additional unnecessary requirements.

I request that you please restrict the potential overreach of this bill and provide exemptions for Somatic Education. I know that other states have achieved this successfully.

I understand the importance of the work you are doing and the spirit and intention of this bill. I hope that it can be revised in a way that will not harm those who are providing a unique and critical service to many in the disability community. Thank you for your attention to my opinion on this matter.

Sincerely,

Traci Kraft
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