

Melinda Murphy Written Testimony
Sub HB 81
Senate Health Committee
May 28, 2022

Dear Chair Huffman, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony as a Proponent of Sub. House Bill 81, a bill to make changes to the laws governing massage establishments and massage therapy.

I support Sub HB 81, provided that subsection Sec. 4731.15. (F) (5) remains intact. This subsection was added by the House and exempts individuals who:

“(hold) a certification, based on a minimum level of training, competency demonstration, and adherence to ethical standards, from a professional association or other credentialing body to practice movement or somatic education, which includes using touch, words and directed movement, with a fully clothed client, to deepen awareness of existing patterns of movement or suggest new possibilities of movement and does not include massage therapy.”

I am a resident of Westerville Ohio who teaches The Feldenkrais Method® of somatic education and The Alexander Technique which are both forms of movement education. I have been certified in both methods since 1987.

In 1998 I returned to Ohio and, have since, taught both private and group lessons all over the state. This includes current ongoing classes at Otterbein University in the Department of Theater and Dance as well as the Health Sport Science Department. I have also been employed as a guest teacher at several other universities around the state.

Both The Feldenkrais® Method and The Alexander Technique use a wide variety of skills to create a safe atmosphere for learning, including verbal and hands-on instruction, as well as demonstration and experiential learning to guide students to better understand their patterns of movement and, thus, improve posture,

agility and function, or to avoid or recover from injury. Since the onset of Covid-19, I have developed lesson plans that include teaching in a virtual (Zoom) format.

A certified Feldenkrais teacher requires a minimum of 800 hours of study followed by appropriate continuing study. Alexander Technique teachers complete 1200-1600 hours. Both methods require regular continuing education to maintain certification. Teachers of both methods must adhere to strict standards of practice and a code of ethics. These methods are practiced worldwide.

Massage licensure requirements are not appropriate for Feldenkrais Method® or Alexander Technique teachers because they are an educational system and are not massage. Our training and practice is completely different than that of massage therapists.

There has been no allegation of criminal activity taking place in Ohio under the guise of the practice of Feldenkrais or the Alexander Technique.

Please report Sub HB 81 out of committee favorably, with the exemption to protect the right to practice methods of movement and somatic education.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Melinda Murphy

Guild certified Feldenkrais Practitioner®

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