

Linda D. Taylor Witness Testimony
Sub HB 81
Senate Health Committee
June 1, 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, as long as it includes the following amendment to Sec. 4731.15. (F) “The following persons are not required to hold a license to practice massage therapy issued under this chapter...(5) A person who holds 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 testifying as a Proponent with personal knowledge of a discipline of somatic and movement education: the Anat Baniel Method NeuroMovement. I have studied, observed and experienced the benefit of ABMNM for many years.

The Anat Baniel Method NeuroMovement requires two years of training to be certified as a Practitioner and an additional year of training to be certified for working with Special Needs Children.

I’m the director of an award-winning video documentary ***Champions Together: An Anat Baniel Method NeuroMovement Practitioner Works with Special Needs Children and Their Parents*** (2021). I was awarded an Individual Artist Grant by the **Greater Columbus Arts Council** for my documentary in 2022. My documentary was also supported by The Ohio State University Department of Theatre, Film and Media Arts, and The Ohio State University Program 60.

Champions Together Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gXLxTsKQ9Fg>

OSU Program 60 made a video about my documentary: *Linda Taylor's Story*:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y6oDL-XjZ-w>

My documentary *Champions Together* shows how the specialized use of touch by an Anat Baniel Method NeuroMovement Practitioner helps Brentlee, an infant with a Brachial Plexus injury at birth, regain functional use of his paralyzed left arm at age six months—without having to undergo a 13-hour surgery. My documentary also shows how a three-year-old girl with Cerebral Palsy gained improved physical and cognitive functioning.

The Anat Baniel Method NeuroMovement is based on the understanding that movement is the language of the brain. Movement provides information the brain needs to organize itself. And, in return the brain organizes all movement, thought, feelings and action.

In the case of Brentlee, with a paralyzed left arm at birth, because the arm never moved, the brain didn't develop a 'map' of that arm. However, movement of the arm requires not just the injured brachial plexus at the shoulder, but many other muscles in the back, front and side of the torso which are already functioning. The use of touch by the ABMNM practitioner can 'wake up' these interconnected muscles, eventually leading to movement by the formerly paralyzed arm. The practitioner began working with Brentlee at 2 months. At 4 months, Brentlee's left arm began to move for the first time. By 6 months, he could raise his arm vertically with his hand above his head.

Although the Anat Baniel Method NeuroMovement includes touch as integral to their movement educational practice—they do NOT practice massage. The purpose, use and type of touch in ABMN movement education is very different from massage.

In the Anat Baniel Method NeuroMovement, touch by the Certified Practitioner creates greater awareness of movement, interacting with the student's nervous system, helping to create new neural pathways in the brain, taking advantage of brain plasticity. The Anat Baniel Method NeuroMovement is now being studied by academic researchers at the forefront of the brain plasticity movement.

The Anat Baniel Method NeuroMovement helps to create greater ease of movement and improve functioning by getting at the root cause of the student's (client's) difficulties, often providing long-lasting relief and educating students to bring awareness to movement, thereby empowering themselves.

The Federation of Therapeutic Massage, Bodywork & Somatic Practice Organizations was formed to deal with commonalities and differences among its ten professional member organizations, including the American Massage Therapy Association. All of these organizations are united in their fundamental values of professionalism, high ethical standards, commitment to service, public education and the right to practice to benefit individuals and society at large. The Federation advocates mutual support and respect for the diverse identities of their disciplines and recognizes that "movement and somatic education" disciplines are NOT forms of massage.

<http://www.federationmbs.org/mission.html>

As a filmmaker who has made a documentary about the Anat Baniel Method NeuroMovement, I want to affirm the importance of ABMNM for the betterment of Ohio and Ohioans. Without this amendment, Ohio practitioners of somatic and movement education disciplines like ABMNM would not be able to earn a living, and the citizens of Ohio would not benefit from their practice.

I respectfully request your support for the exemption language of Sub HB 81, Sec. 4731.15 (F)(5) of the Revised Code

Sincerely,

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