



HEALTH FREEDOM NEWS

A Publication of National Health Freedom Coalition

Spring 2004

Working to Protect Your Access to Healing Options

Being able to make your own decisions about your health and healing options is important. Unfortunately, laws and public policies have grown up in our country limiting our access to information and services. National Health Freedom Coalition (NHFC) is working to promote access to maximum healing and health care options for consumers. NHFC analyzes existing laws and public policies, develops creative solutions and trains advocates who wish to work for change. NHFC teaches citizens health freedom principles and the basics of organizing and mobilizing resources to make change happen.

Having free access to all health care practitioners, products, services and information involves federal laws, state laws, and even international laws. One of the most pressing needs right now is reform of state practitioner regulations. Many people have historically been unaware of the jeopardy under which their alternative healers practice. However, in many states, under present laws, alternative practitioners are at risk of being closed down or prosecuted.

Nearly all states have prohibitions against practicing medicine without a license, and the 'practice of medicine' is defined so broadly that it includes virtually any kind of healing work. Thus many practitioners who do not have some form of medical license are vulnerable to criminal prosecution.

Licensed practitioners such as doctors, nurses and dentists, who are offering alternative services, have a different problem. They risk losing their licenses for practicing outside of the mini-



Keynote speakers Clinton Miller, Jim Turner and Diane Miller at NHFC Conference.

mal standards of the accepted and prevailing practice for their profession.

Amazingly, prosecutions are happening even when there is no evidence of harm to the public, and when statements made by practitioners are truthful. You might ask, "Why can't I have access to this healer? No harm has been done!" That is what many folks are now asking, and that is precisely why the health freedom movement is rippling across the country in a new way, changing antiquated legislation to provide us with the choices we need and want.

NHFC works hand in hand with its sister organization, National Health Freedom Action, (NHFA) a lobbying group, and is instrumental in providing information and resources to independent health freedom groups and individuals in over 30 states. Already, three states, Minnesota, Rhode Island, and California, have succeeded in

passing health freedom legislation that removes blockages to consumer access to unlicensed health care practitioners. The new laws exempt practitioners who comply with particular requirements from criminal charges of practicing medicine without a license. Thus many vocations and trades that do not pose an imminent risk of harm to the public are being returned to public domain. Other states have introduced similar legislation, and some are also advocating legislation to expand the ability of licensed practitioners, such as doctors, dentists, and nurses, to use unconventional healing methods. Change is happening rapidly!

Diane Miller, Director of Legal and Public Policy for NHFC and NHEFA, says, "Our goal is to mobilize the resources needed to address every piece of the complex web of regulations that limit options in health and healing. That means freeing unlicensed healers from fear of arbitrary criminal prosecution. It means giving licensed healers latitude to use unconventional healing methods for their patients. It means ensuring that substances and devices used for healing will be freely accessible, and that practitioners can give truthful information about them."

NHFC hopes that soon there will be a health freedom presence in all 50 states, including knowledgeable advocates able to respond to any infringement on their rights to access the healing arts.

In the US, we have many freedoms that we cherish: freedom of speech, freedom of religion, the right to assemble, and most importantly the freedom to be in charge of our own health and well-being. Our laws need to reflect these rights and protect our access to all of the kinds of health care that we deem best for ourselves.

We would love to have you join us in our efforts! If you would like to become a member, go to our website at www.nationalhealthfreedom.org, or call 651 688 6515.

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National Health Freedom Coalition

THE VISION:

A healthy nation, with empowered people, making informed health care decisions.

The Mission:

To promote access to all health care information, services, treatments and products that the people deem beneficial for their own health and survival; to promote an understanding of the laws and factors impacting the right to access; and to promote the health of the people of this nation.

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PMD 218, 2136 Ford Parkway

St. Paul, MN 55116-1863

www.nationalhealthfreedom.com

email: similar@aol.com

Phone: 651-690-0732

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Health Freedom Leaders Gather

First Annual National Conference for Health Freedom Advocates

September 30 – November 2, 2003

In the beautiful halls of Assisi Heights, Rochester, Minnesota, some of the finest minds and most superb activists for health freedom in our country gathered for the first annual Conference for Health Freedom Advocates sponsored by NHFC.

Keynote speaker Clinton Miller, health freedom advocate for five decades, laid the historical groundwork. From 1962 until 1972, Miller helped to resist the FDA's proposals to limit the potency of vitamin and mineral supplements, and to require a doctor's prescription for higher potencies. Do you take for granted your right to take 500 mg of vitamin C every morning? Where would we be today if it were not for heroes like Clinton Miller who fought hard to retain our right to make that choice?

Keynote speaker and attorney James Turner addressed the broad picture of freedom, maintaining that "*the backbone of freedom is information and choice*," and that people, given good information, can make the choices that are best for them. There is a growing movement for not only alternative health care, but also for non-toxic energy, alternative transportation modes, and alternative types of education. The many segments of this movement can benefit from working together for common goals.

Attorney and keynote speaker Diane Miller gave examples where old and outdated laws are jeopardizing our abilities to make our own choices in our health care.

Currently Director of Legal and Public Policy for NHFC, Miller described the Lilly Rott case in Oklahoma where four children have been taken away from their parents by child protection because the parents took their daughter with leukemia to a Switzerland Cancer Hospital for care instead of staying in the American hospital. Billy Best is a young man who had cancer and who used the supplement 714X from Canada; but now the US government is not allowing 714X to be brought across the border into the United States; and a nurse in Wisconsin who was helping people with NAET allergy testing was charged with practicing medicine without a license.

Having recently spent an afternoon at the Jefferson Memorial, she read from the words of Thomas Jefferson, "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free in a state of civilization, it expects

what never was, and never will be." Miller emphasized the need to change and revise laws as a country grows and develops into new awareness, and that we must be proactive in shaping our laws and public policies to conform with our emerging consciousness.

The conference program included panels of health freedom leaders from 10 states who shared strategies for success in introducing health freedom legislation in their states. Other leaders provided workshops on grass-roots mobilization, lobbying, and fund-raising.

Honored and inspired by the great heritage left by leaders before us, we were all re-committed to doing our part now to address the challenges of this new day.



Health freedom advocate Clinton Miller and his wife Bonnie.

Award Banquet Honors Health Freedom Leaders

Health Freedom Leadership Awards were given to the following leaders for outstanding contribution to health freedom:

Clinton Miller has advocated and lobbied for over five decades to protect our health freedoms. Miller was instrumental in drafting and lobbying the Proxmir Vitamin Bill, which prevented the FDA from limiting potency on vitamins unless they were found to be intrinsically dangerous, and also in the passage of the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA) of 1994.

Jim Turner, Esq., is founder and President of Citizens for Health, a national consumer organization. Turner was a leader in passage of DSHEA, which ensured all Americans access to natural substances such as vitamins and herbs. Turner has represented mercury-free dentists before

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Three Recently Passed Health Freedom Bills

Three states have recently passed legislation that returns the healing arts to the public domain when there is not an imminent risk of significant harm to the public. These new laws help to protect the rights of consumers to have access to the practitioners of their choice.

Minnesota Statute 146A

Minnesota Natural Health Legal Reform Project mobilized to promote groundbreaking legislation in 2000. This bill exempted unlicensed practitioners from criminal charges of practice of medicine without a license when their services do not rise to the level of creating an imminent risk of significant harm. Certain activities (such as dispensing legend drugs or controlled substances, telling people to go off their prescribed medical treatments, puncturing the skin) are prohibited. The new law created an office of government oversight, not to make rules regarding education, training, or standard of care, but to respond to and investigate consumer complaints when needed. It listed grounds for disciplinary action regarding professional conduct, and required practitioners to give their clients a Client Bill of Rights, which includes, among other things, disclosure of their education and training.

Rhode Island Health Freedom Bill

Rhode Island passed its health freedom bill for access to unlicensed practitioners in 2001. According to Boyd Landry, of the Coalition for Natural Health, (CNH) this bill was a combined effort of the Rhode Island Medical Society and CNH, and was patterned after the bill that passed in Minnesota. HB 6719b, authored by Rep. Corveci, supported by the Department of Health, and then finally the legislature and governor, was a way to protect consumer access and practitioners. The health freedom movement is grateful to CNH for their great work in this process.

California's Successful Bid for Health Freedom: SB577

On September 23, 2002, California governor Gray Davis signed SB577, a health freedom bill sponsored by the California Health Freedom Coalition (CHFC). Effective January 2003, California joined Minnesota, Rhode Island, and Idaho, in allowing unlicensed alternative health care practitioners to lawfully practice without violating the state's medical practice act.

Because of the severe budgetary constraints in California, the CHFC pursued an interesting and somewhat technical legislative strategy - a strategy that carried no costs to the state. Instead of creating an explicit governmental organization to monitor and control alternative practitioners as Minnesota did, SB577 simply modifies California's medical practice act so that only those practices that pose a clear potential risk to the client are restricted. Anyone who provides a therapy that does not violate these restrictions can no longer be prosecuted under the medical practice act and cannot be accused of practicing medicine without a license.

Actually, SB577 imposes both negative and positive requirements on unlicensed health-care practitioners. The negative constraints clearly spell out those things that are reserved for licensed practitioners, such as surgery, radiation, harmfully invading the body, making recommendations vis-a-vis prescription drugs, setting fractures, or doing anything that causes risk of great physical or mental harm. The positive requirements compel practitioners to provide disclosure to their clients: that one is not a licensed physician and that one's healing practice is not licensed by the state, their training and experience, and a description of the rationale

behind one's method of treatment.

In combination, these requirements serve to protect patients while allowing for maximum health freedom. And the bill is only two pages long! This approach turned out to be a highly successful one. Not a single legislator voted against SB577; it passed unanimously in both the Assembly and Senate, and the entire campaign, from beginning to end, was under two years. Several other states are now using California's bill as their legislative model.

SB577 passed before California's new licensing bill for naturopathic doctors (SB907) passed in the fall of 2003, so the proponents of SB907 worked to make their Naturopathic Doctor bill successfully interface with SB577 to protect the freedoms won by SB577. A specific clause was added to SB907 to preserve the rights won under SB577 for all alternative practitioners in

California. In addition, language was added to protect the rights of traditional naturopathic practitioners to use the title "naturopath". The CHFC is continuing their work in monitoring and protecting health freedom in California. For more information, visit www.californiahealthfreedom.org.

—By Amy Lansky



Leaders from California Jenn Doolin and John Melnychuk receive NHFC award.



Boyd Landry, Executive Director of Coalition for Natural Health promoted RI health freedom law.



(Left to Right) Minnesota activists Diane Miller, Nancy Hone, Jerri Johnson, Eleanor Schultz, LaDonna Gammel, Leo Cashman, Jeff Coult, Marilyn Beyer and Greg Schmidt.

New Proposed Federal Bill Threatens to Restrict Access to Dietary Supplements

In 1994, millions of consumers contacted Congress urging support for the Dietary Supplement Health & Education Act (DSHEA), the regulatory framework for dietary supplements. This regulation appropriately protects consumer access to a wide range of beneficial health products and puts the burden of proof on the FDA to show harm to consumers before our access is denied. Now Senate Bill 722 threatens to alter DSHEA and to remove safe products from market shelves and restrict your right to access the dietary supplements of your choice.

NHFC Legal and Public Policy Director says that the most harmful aspect of this bill is the way that it impacts the role of government in our society. "This bill would force the consumers to lose access immediately because manufacturers could be investigated and requested to financially lay out the funds to prove safety of a substance if as little as one complaint comes in from any source, instead of holding the government accountable in its role of burden of proof to prove substantial harm to consumers through verified and investigated complaints before access is denied.

According to Ana Micka, President and CEO of Citizens for Health, (CFH) a consumer-based organization in Washington, D.C., this bill

appears to be "gathering steam." S722 is presented as a "safety" bill - promising to safeguard consumers from unsafe dietary supplements - but it does not. Instead, says CFH, the bill:

- Restricts access to supplements used by millions for better health
- Increases health care costs and decreases consumer choices
- Subjects supplements to an unnecessary higher standard of scrutiny than most over-the-counter medicines and food additives
- Questions the safety and potentially restricts access to any dietary supplement that receives even one complaint, legitimate or not.
- Provides no more protection for consumers than the current law-DSHEA-already provides. The FDA has simply failed to fully implement the existing law.

Congress needs to hear from you! If you rely on vitamin and mineral supplements for better health and want to protect your right to personal health choice, TAKE ACTION TODAY! Send a letter to your Senators and Representative. Ask them to uphold DSHEA and preserve access to natural, safe and affordable products! You can go to the CFH website and easily send a message, written by CFH, to your senators. www.citizens.org/.

Dietary Supplement Safety Act of 2003 (S. 722) (Sen Durbin, IL)

Dietary Supplement Access and Awareness Act (H.R. 3377)(Rep. Davis, CA)

—This article paid for by National Health Freedom Action, a 501©4 nonprofit organization. ■

**Announcing Second Annual
Health Freedom Conference!
2004 National Conference for
Health Freedom Advocates
September 10-12, 2004**

At the beautiful Carondelet Center, St. Paul, MN

Keynote Speakers:

DR. NORM SHEALY, MD, Founder of
American Holistic Medical Association

FORMER CONGRESSMAN BERKELY BEDELL, Founder
of National Foundation for Alternative Medicine

DIANE MILLER, JD, NHFC, Director
of Legal and Public Policy, NHFC

*Come meet health freedom advocates from
across the country! Learn to be an effective
advocate for health freedom principles!*

**To receive an invitation to this conference,
email jerrjohn@aol.com
www.nationalhealthfreedom.org**



National Health Freedom Action

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PMD 218, 2136 Ford Pkwy
St. Paul, MN 55116-1863

www.nationalhealthfreedom.com

email: similar@aol.com

Phone: 651-690-0732

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licensing boards, and represented organic farmers in lobbying for passage of the Organic Food Production Act of 1990.

Calvin Johnson, Esq., lead defense attorney in Minnesota's State v. Saunders, successfully defended Herb Saunders from criminal charges of "practice of medicine without a license." Saunders provided colostrum from his farm to people who were ill and who desired it in order to boost their immune systems.

The Minnesota Natural Health Legal Reform Project initiated and worked to pass groundbreaking legislation that exempts unlicensed health care practitioners who follow spe-

cific guidelines from criminal charges of practicing medicine without a license.

Boyd Landry and the Coalition for Natural Health (CNH) were honored for helping to pass health freedom legislation similar to Minnesota's in Rhode Island. CNH is dedicated to protecting every citizen's right to natural health freedom of choice.

California Health Freedom Coalition, represented by John Melnychuk and Jen Doolin, exhibited great teamwork to initiate and bring to passage California SB577, health freedom legislation that exempts unlicensed health care practitioners who follow specific guidelines from criminal charges of practicing medicine without a license. ■

Independent State Health Freedom Groups Take Action!

by Diane Miller JD, Director of Legal and Public Policy for NHFC and NHFA

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The health freedom movement is growing logarithmically. A very impressive and successful arm of the movement is the effort to free up consumer access to the many kinds of healers and health care practitioners that offer complementary or alternative care. This is being accomplished by independent health freedom groups around the country that are creating new laws that bring the practitioner rights back into the public domain.

Consumers are absolutely demanding that they have access to any individual that they want and any information they desire when they are making health care choices. Historically many practitioners were prohibited from practicing due to outdated state laws, which made all of healing a crime unless you were a licensed medical professional. Even if a practitioner was a licensed medical practitioner, they could lose their license for practicing outside of the prevailing standards of medical care.

Now this is all changing as state health freedom groups are going forward to exempt practitioners from the old laws and advocating for the passage of new laws that allow unlicensed and licensed practitioners to practice the broad range of healing arts as long as they have not been shown to pose an imminent risk of significant harm to the public, thus not warranting police power regulation.



Deborah Miller, President of Florida Health Freedom Coalition and their lobbyist, Brecht Heuchan at the Florida Capitol.

Here is a summary of some of the state activity underway:

Florida: Florida Health Freedom Coalition and Action are successfully promoting health freedom legislation in Florida. SF 1474 and HB 801 has been introduced and referred to committees. Representative Garcia held an informational workshop in the House in February with great

interest and success. Senator Campbell will promote SB 1474 in the Senate at it's first official hearing on Tuesday March 9th.

Georgia: CAMA Complementary and Alternative Medical Association. of Georgia has been a leader in the country in educating the public about complementary and alternative forms of healing, holding statewide and regional conferences. House Bill 1040 has been introduced this session and is entitled the "State Planning For Increased Community Access Act". Marge Roberts, their President, continues to educate and gave a great presentation on grassroots lobbying in November 2003, at the first annual Health Freedom Conference in Minnesota.

Hawaii: Representative Cynthia Evans introduced HB 2036 that allows unlicensed practitioners of health-related services to provide services. Hawaii currently has exemptions to the medical practice act for traditional Hawaiian healing practices by traditional native Hawaiian healers, both as recognized and certified as such by a panel convened by Papa Ola Lokahi. Hawaii also has licensed naturopaths. Most recently we heard that the bill was not heard in committee.

States that have freedom of access bills already introduced and moving

STATE	CONTACT	BILLS
Florida	FHFC & FHFA www.floridahealthfreedom.org info@floridahealthfreedom.org	HB 801 (Garcia) SB 1474 (Campbell)
Georgia	CAMAction, 404-284-7592 Website: www.CAMAction.org and www.camaweb.org Email: cama@mindspring.com	HB 1040 (Smith)
Hawaii	Representative Cynthia Evans, Phone: 808-586-8510 E-mail: repevans@Capitol.Hawaii.gov www.capitol.Hawaii.gov/site1/house	HB 2036 (Evans, Tamayo, Wakai)
Iowa	Iowa Health Freedom Coalition, Larry: 319-269-6343 David: 641-469-3289, Jon: 515-244-8535, E-mail: ljhanz@yahoo.com Website: http://www.iowahealthfreedom.org	HF 477 (Hatch) SF (Fallon)
Kentucky	Representative Mary Harper http://www.lrc.state.ky.us/House/hseadd.htm	HB 181 (Harper)
Washington	541-504-7562 drkline@pacifichealthcenter.com	HB 2355 (Hinkle & Dickerson)

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Iowa: Iowa Health Freedom Coalition is a young strong health freedom group moving fast. SF294 and HF477 were introduced this session after a summer informational hearing sponsored by the Senate. In late February, Committee Chair Representative Boeddiger held a Subcommittee public meeting and Iowan's packed the meeting room to voice their support. Concerns were aired by the medical lobbyists in response to support testimony by freedom advocates. On March 2nd the bill came up for vote in the House full Committee and advocates packed the room once again. The bill was voted down by a 2-vote margin after a special party caucus to assess the votes. Iowa health freedom leaders will continue their great work in the future. Friendly legislators have stated an interest in continuing to move the bill in future sessions.

Congratulations Iowa for a job well done. IHFC has a great website, a 15 minute video of Berkley Bedell supporting their bills, and a colorful and informative power point presentation that they developed themselves to educate the public regarding the need for health freedom.

Kentucky: Representative Mary Harper has introduced HB 181, a health freedom bill modeled in some areas after California's 2002 SB 577. Lexington, Kentucky holds wonderful wellness centers and an active healing arts community.

Washington: HB2355 would exempt unlicensed practitioners from criminal charges of unlicensed practice of the licensed health professions in Washington if they practice within certain parameters and comply with certain disclo-

tures. The bill is modeled in part on California's 2002 SB 577 and in part on new language. Latest word is that the committee chair did not put this bill on for hearing. Advocates are continuing to plan for the next session.

New York: In the past two years New York has had health freedom legislation introduced but no action was taken on these bills. They now expect to introduce a new bill, which would require that all alternative health care practitioners in the State of New York register with a state government office (Consumer Affairs) before they practice the healing arts in New York. NHFA does not support the concept of registration for unlicensed practitioners of the healing arts. (See Article in this newsletter on registration). National Health Freedom Action will neither support nor actively oppose New York's registration bill if it goes forward but rather it will educate the public on the health freedom vision and educate on the difference between registration and health freedom legislation and its impact on the public

Bills requiring Registration of Unlicensed Practitioners: (See Article on the differences between registration and health freedom legislative language)

STATE	CONTACT	BILLS
New York	New York Natural and Complementary Practices Project Newyorknaturalhealthproject.org nynhp@earthlink.net	
North Carolina	CHF (North Carolina): CHF@nc.rr.com Website: www.citizensforhealthcarefreedom.org	HB 923 (Luebke)

North Carolina: In the 2003 North Carolina legislative session the Citizens for Health Care Freedom and Carolina Health freedom Coalition, promoted a health freedom bill for access to unlicensed practitioners. Revisions in session included a registration component being added that was not part of the original bill. The bill is still alive and on hold in the Health Subcommittee and no action has been taken. NHFC expects that 2004 will involve more educating of legislators and grassroots organizing and introduction of a better health freedom bill in the future. North Carolina leaders are very optimistic and mobilizing consumers throughout the state to support their efforts. (See Article on differences of health freedom legislation and registration legislation).

State Organizations In Drafting Stages of Health Freedom Bills: (State groups and legislators preparing draft language and communicating with sponsors for introduction of health freedom bills)

STATES	PROMOTERS OF LEGISLATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
Michigan	Michigan Health Freedom Coalition	Phone: 989-779-0730
New Jersey	New Jersey Natural Health Coalition	Email: membership@njnhc.org web: www.njnhc.org
Wisconsin	Wisconsin Health Freedom Coalition	Email: info@wifhc.com website:www.wifhc.com

State Organizations and Groups Laying Ground-work for Health Freedom Legislation: (Citizen health freedom groups and organizations actively working and considering options for introduction of health freedom legislation)

STATES	NAME OR TYPE OF GROUP	CONTACT INFORMATION
Arkansas	Arkansas Health Freedom Coalition	Phone: 479-637-4361 or 479-637-4441 Email: arhfc@lycos.com www.arhfc.org
Kansas	Kansas for Health Freedom	866-899-7905 (24/7) kscnh@yahoo.com
Massachusetts	Health Freedom Action Massachusetts, Inc	www.healthfreedommassachusetts.org 617-731-5510
New Hampshire	New Hampshire Citizens for Health	Gerhard Bedding 603-355-2202 E-mail: gbedding @earthlink.net
Texas	Texas citizen group	gretchenbfrp@yahoo.com or john@janaka.com
New Mexico	New Mexico citizen group	
Virginia	Virginia Chapter of Certified Natural Health Professionals	E-mail: theherbbasket@erols.com

The following states have significant leaders and contacts ready to start health freedom groups: Colorado, Connecticut, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Utah, and Vermont. Call NHFC for contact information. If you are from a state not yet organized, and want to network with other individuals interested in health freedom, contact us, giving us permission to give out your name to others who contact us.

The following states have health freedom laws: California, Idaho, Minnesota, Oklahoma, and Rhode Island. ■

National Health Freedom Educating about Registration

by Diane Miller JD

National Health Freedom Coalition does not support the concept of government-mandated registration or required permits imposed on unlicensed health care providers. This brief article is written to educate our readers as to our understanding of this issue and we hope that it is helpful and clarifying.

The goal of Consumer Health Freedom of Access law is to maximize consumer access to

as many healers as possible. The architecture of legislative language is simple in that it creates an exemption to current regulatory health practice acts and allows healers to practice freely where the government has not shown that an occupation poses an imminent risk of significant harm to the public. The models are based on fundamental health freedoms: the *freedom* of the citizens to make their own

health choices as they see fit, and the *freedom* of all citizens to practice their vocations, trades, and occupations.

Where fundamental constitutional freedoms are impacted, such as the privacy right to choose ones own health care, the government must use the least restrictive means of regulation that impacts that right. Registration is overly restric-

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Support the Health Freedom Work of NHFC!

With your financial support, the National Health Freedom Coalition can educate health freedom leaders nationwide, and work to create solid solutions that ensure your access to all of the healing arts. Together, we can protect your right to investigate every possible health choice when you are making decisions about your health.

Become a Health Freedom Champion! — Join the 1000 Health Freedom Champions Campaign

NHFC is looking for 1000 Health Freedom Champions who will commit to donating \$250 or more per year to support the work of NHFC. To become a Health Freedom Champion, send your gift of \$250 today! You will receive our newsletter, *Health Freedom News*. If you wish, a portion of your donation can include a one-year membership in NHFC.

Become a Member of NHFC!

Please join the growing number of citizens who support health freedom by becoming members of NHFC. Your membership gift of \$35 or more entitles you to receive our newsletter, *Health Freedom News*. Complete the following form and join us today!

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I would like a portion of this gift to include a one-year membership in NHFC

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Consumer Freedom of Access legislation is less restrictive, and allows healers to practice freely, at the same time putting in place public laws that address important public policy concerns regarding healing professions. It does not assume that the government has jurisdiction over all healing arts providers just because they practice healing. Rather health freedom laws assume that unlicensed providers are in the public domain and free to practice their trades as long as the government has not shown that it has a reason to regulate.

Unlike licensed health care professional laws where the police power of the government has been invoked to confer a privilege on a particular occupation to do potentially harmful acts, and provides that group with protection if they abide by a set of mandated standards and training, the health freedom legislation provides a legal exemption to licensing acts based on the lack of need for regulation where there has been no showing of imminent risk of harm to the public. Our country has a belief that individuals can practice their trades or occupations freely and

that consumers have access to every trade without restriction. Government involvement of identifying, managing, or mandating acts before an individual can act needs to be grounded in constitutional principles.

Mandatory registration or permit requirements negatively impact consumers' access. They will lose legal access to healing practitioners who do not sign up and pay fees. Costs to consumers increase because government expends funds and because practitioners pass on fees to clients. Mis-use of the title "registered" by practitioners, to establish credibility, can cause misrepresentation to consumers. Negative impact on practitioners exists as well. They must sign up with the government and pay a fee before acting. They find themselves under the jurisdiction of an agency where there are future risks of additional regulation through rulemaking, such as random inspections or mandatory education. There is the risk that the registration law will be converted to an exclusive professional licensing law. Registration could also cause a practitioner to lose their right to the defense of lack of jurisdiction should a person be detained.

It is extremely important that Health Freedom legislation is understood as an exemption to privileged licensing laws and not considered another form of regulation or credentialing. It is not a "privilege" to practice these trades. It is a "right".

NHFC believes that health freedom laws are a common sense-solution to a long-term problem of consumer access to unlicensed providers, and to the turf wars between providers. The less restrictive health freedom bills create important legal reform to promote the free access to and free practice of a broad range of healers that have not been shown to pose a public risk. We believe that this type of solution will promote a strong, free, and diverse culture. It will free up the government from unnecessary regulation. It will bring back healing into the public domain. And the disclosure will promote empowered and informed citizens who will be able to communicate among their conventional health care providers about the wonderful wellness techniques and practitioners they are using to gain health. ■



National Health Freedom Coalition
PMB 218, 2136 Ford Parkway
St. Paul, MN 55116-1863

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