



March 24, 2021

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass
Health and Government Operations Committee
House Office Building, room 241
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: OPPOSE SB0125 State Board of Chiropractic Examiners - Sunset Extension

Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Secular Maryland is opposed to government facilitating, enabling, or promoting the dubious practice of chiropractic "medicine".

According to Daniel D. Palmer, the late 19th century founder of chiropractic, "vertebral subluxation" was the cause of diseases and manipulation was the cure. It has three core premises: (1) the body is possessed of an "innate intelligence" that permits it, under ordinary circumstances, to repair itself as needed; (2) this innate intelligence is transmitted through the nervous system, and disease is usually caused by disruptions in the "nerve flow" resulting from "subluxation," or misalignment, of the vertebrae; therefore (3) pretty much any ailment — deafness, heart trouble, you name it — can be treated by manual adjustments to the spine. These general premises originated inside Mr. Palmer's head, unsupported by empirical evidence. The last two premises in particular are strongly counter-evidenced and qualify as fictions.

For most of its existence, chiropractic has clashed with mainstream medicine, sustained by antiscientific and pseudoscientific ideas. Chiropractic researchers have documented that fraud, abuse, and quackery are more prevalent in chiropractic than in other health care professions. Unsubstantiated claims about the efficacy of chiropractic have continued to be made by individual chiropractors and chiropractic associations. Collectively, systematic reviews have not demonstrated that spinal manipulation, the main treatment method employed by chiropractors, was effective for any medical condition, with the possible exception of treatment for back pain.