

Written Testimony of HB1527 Favorable

Complementary and Alternative Health Care Practice Act

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Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of HB1527, the Complementary and Alternative Health Care Practice Act.

I bring a unique perspective to this issue. I spent 38 years working in conventional medicine, first as a Cytotechnologist and later as a Physician Assistant. I have great respect for the role licensed medicine plays in protecting patients and providing critical medical care. At the same time, my own personal health journey showed me the value of complementary approaches. When conventional treatment was unable to fully resolve my health challenges, it was through holistic and traditional wellness practices that I was able to regain my health and well-being.

Because of that experience, I pursued extensive education and training in complementary health disciplines. I am trained in Nutrition Response Testing, BioEnergetic Rebalancing Therapy, and as a Nutrition Therapy Practitioner. I also operate a school that teaches these techniques responsibly and provide educational instruction through programs affiliated with the American Naturopathic Medical Association (ANMA).

These complementary health disciplines require years of training, mentorship, and significant financial investment, yet they are not professions that have licensing requirements. Usually they are trade like certifications. Unfortunately, current health care statutes in Maryland are written so broadly that they can unintentionally place trained wellness practitioners at risk of being accused of practicing medicine, even when they are clearly operating within non-medical wellness traditions.

HB1527 helps resolve this issue by strengthening and clarifying Maryland's existing laws.

The bill establishes clear guardrails that protect the scope of licensed medical professionals, while also defining the boundaries for complementary practitioners. It explicitly prohibits complementary practitioners from performing medical procedures such as surgery, prescribing medications, administering radiation, setting fractures, manipulating joints or the spine, or interfering with treatment prescribed by licensed health care providers.

At the same time, the bill enhances consumer protection and transparency by requiring practitioners to provide clear disclosures that include:

- the practitioner's name and contact information,
- the nature of the complementary services provided,
- their education and training, and
- a clear statement that the practitioner is not licensed by the State of Maryland as a health care provider.

This ensures that consumers are fully informed before receiving services, while still preserving their ability to make personal decisions about complementary wellness options.

Maryland is a diverse state that values respect for cultural traditions and personal health choices. Many residents seek complementary approaches such as nutritional support, traditional healing methods, lifestyle-based care, and other wellness practices as part of their overall health strategy.

HB1527 provides a balanced framework that strengthens transparency, clarifies existing laws, and supports consumer protection. By clearly defining what complementary practitioners can and cannot do, the bill reduces regulatory confusion while ensuring that consumers remain fully informed about the services they receive.

When practitioners operate within clear legal boundaries and transparent disclosure requirements, both practitioners and consumers are better protected.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to support HB1527 as a responsible and balanced policy that promotes consumer protection, regulatory clarity, cultural respect, and freedom of health choice for the citizens of Maryland.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Raelynn Torzone