

HB16-1320 – Testimonial from Elena Patiño, Reflex Therapist and Activist

Mr. or Madam Chair, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to present to you today. My name is Elena Patiño, I am a reflex therapist and women's rights activist, who opposes the removal of the exclusion from the massage statute for alternative therapists, as well as the imposition of any regulatory scheme.

Prior to my becoming an alternative health practitioner, I attended Harvard University and graduated with a Master's degree in international development focused on women's rights. I also worked for Harvard Law School and Kennedy School of Government for 7 years organizing research and programs to promote international human rights.

Now, as a reflex therapist, I practice a combination of reflexology and ortho-bionomy, gentle touch therapies that stimulate the body's reflexes. They relax the nervous system, release tension and congestion, and help the body find its natural balance or homeostasis. In my practice, I work with people facing a variety of health challenges. I assist those with chronic pain such as arthritis, fibromyalgia or Crohn's disease. I also work with diabetics and heart disease patients in maintaining healthy circulation; cancer patients to reduce stress and support their recovery, as well as hospice patients, with palliative care.

Alternative practitioners, such as myself, integrate different types of holistic trainings into one practice. For example, I have trained with different programs, locally, nationally and internationally and invested over \$100,000 in the last 10 years to reach proficiency in 5 different therapies. I have also gained immense knowledge from specific teachers and Masters of different techniques. As alternative practitioners, we have acquired much of our expertise by hands on learning, as well.

Many practitioners have created their own integrated practices by learning and working with varied practices and developing their own unique expression of them. This integration is reflected in the personalized sessions that they give to support client's health and well-being. In many cases, such as my own, there is not just one standard of certification, or type of practice, as there is with massage.

Alternative therapies are unique in that most practitioners create their own individualized version of the therapy they practice. Attempting to standardize or pigeon-hole each therapy takes away from the true nature of the work, which promotes specialized development and practice, in the way that best utilizes the practitioner's skills and experience, and ultimately, best serves the client.

Alternative therapies are separate and distinct from massage, and should continue to be excluded under the current massage statute. I urge you to continue to focus our time, energy and resources on policies that target and penalize those conducting prostitution, trafficking and illicit activities, not on creating rules, regulations and unnecessary oversight for alternative therapists who provide valuable, supportive, health services in our communities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Please feel free to contact me should you require additional information.

Elena Patiño

Reflex Therapist

MEd, NBCR Board Certified Reflexologist, Associate of Ortho-bionomy©

303-669-1797

coreflextherapy@gmail.com

HB16-1320