

NEWS RELEASE

New Health Freedom Bill Launched in Texas

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The Complementary and Alternative Health Care Services Bill (House Bill 1716/ Senate Bill 1084) is a brand-new bill, just filed in the State legislature. It recognizes the safety of complementary-and-alternative modalities and will protect the natural health-care industry from the rampages of arbitrary and mindless medical bureaucrats, and with it also protect patient access to that industry in Texas.

The National Health Federation (NHF) is one of several organizations actively working to get this Bill passed so that Texans' health rights can be protected. The Bill can be found at [HB 1716/SB 1084](#) (full text of Bill not available at this time due to continued text changes).

The Forces Behind the Bill

The National Health Federation, the Texas Health Freedom Coalition, the Sunshine Health Freedom Foundation, and the courageous alternative-health practitioner Michele O'Donnell are working for the health-freedom rights of all alternative practitioners in Texas and for those Texans who want to use those natural health services.

Our lobbyist for this legislation is Robert Flores, who specializes in governmental affairs and public relations. With Texas having over 50,000 providers of complementary and alternative health care and over 6,500,000 Texans currently using this form to maintain their health, passing this legislation is crucial, and we are all doing our best to ensure passage of this vital legislation.

Where This Bill Stands Now

With both HB 1716 (Rep. John Garza author) and SB 1084 (Sen. Jeff Wentworth author) having been filed, HB 1716 is in line already for a hearing before the House Public Health Committee, which will occur soon. While Representative Zedler was the first to joint author the House version of the Bill, Representatives Jodie Laubenberg, Debbie Riddle, and Bill Zedler have signed on to it as joint authors. We expect other legislators to join us as well.

Bill Overview

This Bill will:

- Empower Texas consumers by ensuring access to alternative natural care.
- Help preserve thousands of entrepreneurial Texas CAM businesses.
- Explicitly recognize and respect the rights and privileges of licensed health-care practitioners.

- Create a “safe harbor” and delineate that a person providing complementary and alternative health-care services under this Bill would not be practicing medicine as defined in Subtitle B of the Occupations code. This would protect him or her from persecution by the State Medical Board.

Other important considerations are:

- The Bill will present no cost to the State of Texas.
- More than 3 million Texans currently use and want CAM services to maintain their health. Many of these 1200 therapies have been used for decades and decades; in fact, your grandparents and their grandparents almost certainly only used natural modalities for their health and wellness.
- This industry has thousands and thousands of small business owners, including their staff and their clients, who bring money into the State of Texas and all would be negatively affected if this joint Bill is not passed.
- Practitioners are being harassed and suppressed by the Texas Medical Board for "practicing medicine without a license" simply because they used the word "healing" on their website. This bill will provide them protection.
- This Bill and the mandatory "disclosure statement" will create a distinction of what really constitutes practicing medicine, so, both conventional and alternative medicine may work together for the good health of Texans.
- Health-care bills similar to this one have passed and are now working successfully in eight States and are saving those States significant money.
- This is a self-enforcing Bill. The consumer is protected from harm by CAM therapies (which are already considered benign) by the informed consent "disclosure statement" and access to the full range of existing criminal and civil legal remedies, if needed. The practitioner is protected from the Texas Medical Board and Texas Massage Licensing Unit by clear and concise definitions of what constitutes "practicing medicine without a license" or "practicing massage without a license." If necessary, the CAM practitioners will enforce against their own kind for not adhering to the Bill protocol.
- This issue is long overdue to be resolved in Texas.

Please review the Bill White Paper and the Bill Point Paper ([click here](#))

We are planning the next "Lobby Day" in Austin, Texas, with the goal being to provide the legislative staff and Committee members with more information and awareness about the positive aspects of the joint Bill.

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