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Application ID: 59846

Submitted values are:

Bill or item of business: **Bill 88, Working for Workers Act, 2022**

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Are you submitting material as an individual or on behalf of an organization?

I am submitting material as an individual

Full name

Ms Arria Deepwater

Paste submission

Schedule 5 re disbanding the College of Traditional Chinese Medicine

Bottom line: if someone is sticking needles in other people for a living, I believe having standardized education, certification, and regulation process is a good idea! This change will limit access, diminish credibility, and restrict the growth of the field moving forward. Thank you for your consideration.

I'm writing as an Ontario resident and a patient of a Registered Acupuncturist, to express my concern about the Traditional Chinese Medicine Repeal Act, 2022 of Bill 88, Working for Workers Act, 2022, Schedule 5.

Schedule 5 would undo the regulation of Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) as a health profession in Ontario, and dissolve the College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of Ontario (CTCMPAO).

I find the proposed legislation very concerning for the following reasons:

Without regulation, it would be difficult to tell properly- from improperly-trained Acupuncturists and TCM Practitioners. CTCMPAO members now have to meet the highest standards for acupuncture education and training in Ontario (e.g. more acupuncture-specific hours of training than other health professions). TCM Practitioners are also trained to recognize herb-drug interactions and other herb safety issues. De-regulation would leave me, as a patient, vulnerable and more at risk of unsafe practices.

Patients need proper official oversight of the profession, and avenues for complaint in the case of malpractice or unethical conduct by a practitioner, including sexual abuse. Current investigations and complaints would cease, which is irresponsible with regard to public safety.

Regulation could be improved instead of abolished. The Ministry of Labour says the Traditional Chinese Medicine Repeal Act, 2022 is about increasing access for practitioners, many of whom are immigrants, and may face language barriers and other issues. These are important issues of discrimination that can be solved through implementation of multilingual competency exams (such as those already in place in British Columbia), more affordable licensing fees, identifying and eliminating other barriers for foreign-trained workers in the field.

Without regulation, TCM would be less recognized as an effective and proven health care modality, and an important contributor to Ontarians' physical and mental health. As such:

Insurance companies may stop coverage for Acupuncturist services, which many patients like myself use to access this incredibly helpful and cost-effective health care modality.

Providing TCM services will become less viable as a livelihood, impacting almost 3000 practitioners and their support staff's and associated suppliers' jobs and families. TCM Practitioners are already among the lower-paid regulated health practitioners.

Especially during COVID, we need more effective, affordable and safe options, not fewer, to help Ontarians take care of our health, without relying on overcrowded hospitals and urgent care clinics. TCM is a vital part of the public health care system and should be treated like other regulated health professions.

I hope you will consider removing Schedule 5 from Bill 88, and upholding the regulation of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Ontario. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
Arria Deepwater