



# California Health Freedom Coalition

June 13, 2017

Dear Friends of the California Health Freedom Coalition,

**It's been some time since you have heard from us because Health Freedom has not been under attack at the California Legislature. You're hearing from us today because we have a legislative crisis! Health Freedom and choices are being threatened by SB796 (2017) legislation, that governs the Naturopathic Medicine Committee. This is a lengthy message, but we want to be thorough in explaining the situation when we are asking you to take action.**

**We need you to take action, please, now, and again in few weeks.**

**SB796, unless amended, will eliminate the use of the title "Naturopath" in CA.**

SB 796 has passed the CA Senate and is now in the Assembly. We need your help to stop this bill NOW! The bill seeks to prohibit the use of the titles "naturopath," "naturopathic practitioner," and "traditional naturopath" by anyone who is not a medicalized Naturopath Doctor. SB796 was originally a Sunset Bill for the regulation of medicalized Naturopathic Doctors, but was amended in the Senate Business, Professions, and Economic Development Committee on April 24, 2017 to take the long-standing title of "naturopath" out of the public domain.

**Please Take Action to Oppose SB 796.** Read the bill here:  
[http://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201720180SB796](http://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180SB796)

**There are two groups providing naturopathic care in California;** a smaller medicalized group called Naturopathic Doctors and a larger traditional non-medical group called traditional naturopaths. The medicalized group is attempting to take away the use of the title "naturopath" away from their traditional naturopathic colleagues. They are doing this with their April amendment. SB 796 now threatens the practice and livelihoods of hundreds of traditional naturopaths practicing legally in CA, and harming the traditional naturopathic colleges in CA. Currently in CA traditional naturopaths practice in the public domain under CA Business and Professions Code along with thousands of complementary and alternative health care practitioners as long as they abstain from a list of prohibited acts and they declare in writing they are not physicians, surgeons, or physicians and surgeon, plus other disclosures prior to delivering services.

**In 2003, the new small medicalized Naturopathic Doctor group** won licensure in California by adding risky medical procedures, intravenous infusions (I. V's), and the right to cut into the body, into a scope of practice and requesting the exclusive use of the term Doctor of Naturopathy. However, with the support of Senator John Burton, the terms "naturopath", "traditional naturopath" and "naturopathy" were specifically protected so that the public would be clearly and properly informed about their practitioner.

**Last year tragically,** a patient was killed after receiving an intravenous drip containing turmeric from a medicalized naturopath. The medicalized naturopaths now argue that the solution to protect the public is to prevent any traditional naturopath who does not perform risky medical procedure from using the name "traditional naturopath" and from describing their works as "traditional naturopathy." **This doesn't make sense.**

**We have a second concern** about the Naturopathic Medicine Committee which is asking for more police power. NMC has been criticized in each previous sunset review audit by the Legislature for providing inaccurate, incomplete, and unreliable information to its auditor's, the Senate Business and Professions Committee. So far the Senate B&P Committee has not been satisfied because NMC has been unable to verify any of: *Who made complaints?* - \* *Who was complained about?* \* *What was the method of investigation?* \* *What were the findings of the investigations?* \* *What was the final disposition of the investigations?* \* *How the*

*amount of fines are determined? \* Why fines were reduced on an average of 50%? \* How much was collected from these fines; and, where did the money go?*

We think the NMC should regulate licensed naturopathic doctors, but NMC should not be rewarded with more police power considering its inability to satisfy its auditors in ANY previous legislative sunset review.

**We want the public to know who is treating them and why, including traditional naturopaths**– taking the name naturopathy and naturopath out of the public domain will confuse Californians and perversely reward the medicalized naturopaths for the death caused by one of their own.

**If SB796 passes as now written**, millions of Californians will find it more difficult to access and understand what non-medical traditional naturopathy is.

**If SB796 passes as written**, traditional naturopaths, and Mexican –American curanderos, who practice a form of traditional naturopathy will no longer be able to simply and clearly explain their work to their patients. Most of these practitioners are small business women who serve their communities at a low cost compared to the medicalized naturopaths who are few compared to the traditional naturopaths.

**Write to Senator Jerry Hill, Chair of the Senate Business and Professions Committee.** He is the author of the SB796, and he is in the best position to amend the Bill. Tell Senator Hill you oppose SB796 as written. Politely, ask Senator Hill to adopt the amended language offered by the California Health Freedom Coalition. Ask him to ask about the problems NMC has had in managing a complaint process. His office has that language; you will find this language appended at the end of this message. <http://sd13.senate.ca.gov/send-email>

**Write to Assembly member Evan Low, Chair of the Assembly Business and Professions Committee.** Politely ask Chairman Low to discuss with his Committee the concerns you and CHFC have regarding the language and effect of SB796 – that of stripping the terms “naturopathy” and “naturopath” from the public domain. Ask him to please bring SB796 before a Committee to remove the claim by medicalized naturopaths for their exclusive rights to these titles. Ask him to ask about the problems NMC has had in managing a complaint process. Write to Chairman Low here: <https://a28.asmdc.org/article/contact-evan>

His office has our proposed amendments on file.

After you send a letter, please call your representative’s office to voice your opposition as well. You can find your Assembly Member here: <http://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov>

**Last of all, we are fundraising for a lobbyist to help protect Health Freedom.  
We need to raise \$25,000 in the next 9 days or we’ll be too late to be effective.**

Please send your contribution to:

California Health Freedom Coalition  
3707 Lindero Drive  
Palo Alto, CA 94306

Memo line: SB796 (2017)

We’ll use your contributions wisely to hire a lobbyist and to improve our messaging system.

Thanks so much,

Sincerely,

John Melnychuk  
President, CHFC  
[www.californiahealthfreedom.com](http://www.californiahealthfreedom.com)

You can find the current text of SB796 (2017) here:

[http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201720180SB796](http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180SB796)

**SB796 – Amended Language: Option #1**

On Page 6, Delete Lines 18 through 28 and replace with the following and renumber accordingly:

“amended as follows:

3645. (a) This chapter permits, and does not restrict the use of, the following titles by persons who are educated and trained as any of the following:

- (1) “Naturopath.”
- (2) “Naturopathic practitioner.”
- (3) “Traditional naturopathic practitioner.”

(b) This chapter permits, and does not restrict, the education of persons as described in paragraphs (1) to (3), inclusive, of subdivision (a). Those persons are not required to be licensed under this chapter.

(c) Use of the title "doctor," "Dr.," or "physician" alone or in combination with any other words, letters, or insignia to describe a naturopath, naturopathic practitioners, or traditional naturopathic practitioner, that is not licensed under this act is prohibited.”

A person who advertises or holds themselves out to the public as providing naturopathic services who is not licensed under this act shall disclose in the advertisement or representation that he or she is not licensed as a naturopathic doctor and is not a physician, a surgeon, or a physician and surgeon.

(d) A person who uses the titles in Section 3645 shall, prior to providing services, do the following:

(1) Disclose to the client in a written statement using plain language that he or she is not a not a licensed naturopathic doctor and is not a physician, a surgeon, or a physician and surgeon.

(2) Obtain a written acknowledgement from the client stating that he or she has been provided with the information described in paragraph (1). The client shall be provided with a copy of the written acknowledgement, which shall be maintained by the person providing the service for three years.

On Page 6 delete Line 38

On Page 6, Line 39, delete “*naturopathic practitioner*”

**SB796 – Amended Language Option #2**

On Page 6, Delete Lines 18 through 28 and replace with the following and renumber accordingly:

“amended as follows:

3645. (a) This chapter permits, and does not restrict the use of, the following titles by persons who are educated and trained as any of the following:

- (1) “Naturopath.”
- (2) “Naturopathic practitioner.”
- (3) “Traditional naturopathic practitioner.”

(b) This chapter permits, and does not restrict, the education of persons as described in paragraphs (1) to (3), inclusive, of subdivision (a). Those persons are not required to be licensed under this chapter.

(c) Use of the title "doctor," "Dr.," or "physician" alone or in combination with any other words, letters, or insignia to describe a naturopath, naturopathic practitioners, or traditional naturopathic practitioner, that is not licensed under this act is prohibited.”

On Page 6, Line 39, delete “*naturopathic practitioner*”

