

Proclamation

State of Florida

Complimentary or Alternative Health Care Therapies

WHEREAS, studies indicate health care costs in the United States are steadily increasing, leading the President of the United States to make affordable health care a national priority; and

WHEREAS, Florida has experienced tremendous population growth among all demographic groups, including the elderly and the poor; and

WHEREAS, in 1991 the Florida Legislature enacted the Sunrise Act, section 11.62, Florida Statutes, with the intent no profession or occupation should be made subject to regulation by the state unless necessary to protect the public health, safety or welfare from an imminent risk of significant and discernible harm or damage, considering whether the public is or can be effectively protected by other means as a factor in deciding whether to regulate; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the state and its citizens, and consistent with the Sunrise Act, that Florida avoid unnecessary regulation where there is no imminent risk of significant and discernible harm to the public, and encourage individual responsibility in behavior, informed choices and expenditures relating to health care; and

WHEREAS, there have been in existence well-accepted complementary or alternative health care therapies ("CATH care") which have historically been practiced by persons who are not licensed or regulated by the state of Florida. This CATH care includes herbalism, Qi Gong, food and food supplements, homeopathy, energy healing, mind-body healing practices, natural health care practices, folk remedies and culturally traditional healing practices; and

WHEREAS, a large number of Americans use CATH care nationwide, at an estimated cost of billions of dollars; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Legislature has recognized the value of authorizing licensed health care providers to practice complementary or alternative medicine, and it is in the best interest of the people of the state of Florida to have broader access to complementary or alternative health care modalities; and

WHEREAS, the health, safety and welfare of the people of Florida would benefit from communication between unlicensed complementary or alternative health care practitioners and licensed health care providers, but as few as 20 percent of CATH care users venture to tell their medical providers they use complementary or alternative therapies; and

WHEREAS, recognition of the value of CATH care in the state of Florida will serve the interests of its citizens and visitors by (i) encouraging all CATH practitioners to practice openly, to promote the availability of their services, and to discuss their experience with consumers; (ii) allowing licensed health care providers to support more broadly their patients who wish to access all CATH practitioners; and (iii) freeing consumers of complementary or alternative health care therapies to openly discuss their use of those therapies with all their health care providers in order to achieve coordination of health care;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jeb Bush, Governor of the state of Florida, recognizing the role of alternative health care therapies in providing affordable, quality health care to the people of Florida, hereby encourage education and public discussion about complementary or alternative health care therapies, encourage all Floridians to exercise diligence in choosing a health care practitioner appropriate to their needs, and encourage all licensed health care providers to communicate openly with all health care professionals in the provision of patient care.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I
have hereunto set my hand
and caused the Great Seal of
the state of Florida to be affixed
at Tallahassee, the Capital, this
24th day of April in the year of
our Lord two thousand three.




GOVERNOR