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American Herbalists Guild Statement on Health Freedom Legislation

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The American Herbalists Guild (AHG) is a non-profit, educational, member-based organization founded to represent the goals and voices of herbalists specializing in the medicinal use of plants. The AHG's primary goal is to promote a high level of professionalism and education in the study and practice of therapeutic herbalism.

The AHG mission states that [emphasis added]:

The American Herbalists Guild promotes clinical herbalism as a viable profession rooted in ethics, competency, diversity, and **freedom of practice**. The American Herbalists Guild **supports access to herbal medicine for all** and advocates excellence in herbal education.

Consistent with the spirit and intention of this mission the AHG supports state-level health freedom legislation designed to simultaneously protect the rights of diverse health practitioners while protecting the public through written disclosure and consent requirements. Such legislation has already been passed by several states including Colorado, Minnesota, California, and New Mexico.

Health Freedom legislation may vary slightly from state to state, but in general is defined by the following shared parameters:

- The freedom of the public to choose and have access to a variety of practitioners and modalities of health care
- Legal protections for herbalists and other unlicensed practitioners from violations of state-level Medical Practice Acts while requiring that they provide written disclosure and consent statements to their clients making it clear that they are not licensed physicians.

It is important to recognize that Health Freedom legislation

- does not permit an unlicensed practitioner to engage in practices specific to licensed physicians such as surgery, prescribing of medications; utilization of modern medical diagnostic techniques such as x-rays; and overt, specific, and willful conventional medical diagnosis
- does not protect a practitioner from liability in the case of having caused real and demonstrable harm to one's patients or clients.

For more information, see:

- American Herbalists Guild <http://www.americanherbalistsguild.com/>
The AHG maintains an on-line searchable database of Registered Herbalists who have met the organization's stringent standards for excellence in the field:
<http://www.americanherbalistsguild.com/member-profiles>
- National Health Freedom Coalition <http://www.nationalhealthfreedom.org/Index.html>