

## **CALIFORNIA BILL SB577**

Press release:

*California has passed landmark health freedom legislation - Senate Bill 577. In fact, the bill passed the legislature without a single "no" vote.*

*On September 23, 2002, Senate Bill 577 was signed into law by Governor Davis. As he said when he signed the bill, SB 577 "will ease access to alternative and complementary health care options for all Californians." He also stated that "the bill provides adequate safeguards for California consumers and enables them to make an informed choice regarding their personal health care."*

*SB 577, authored by Senate Pro Tem John Burton (D-San Francisco), provides that a person is not in violation of certain provisions of the Medical Practice Act (that prohibit the practice of medicine to anyone who is not a licensed physician) as long as that person does not engage in certain specified medical acts. It also requires specified disclosures to each client about practitioner training and method of treatment. Client receipt of disclosure materials must be acknowledged in writing.*

*The California Health Freedom Coalition (CHFC), sponsor of the Bill, expects that SB 577 will change and improve the culture of health care in California by enhancing access to alternative forms of health care. Since the law also requires unlicensed alternative and complementary health care practitioners to provide basic information to consumers about themselves, their training, and their work, it also serves to enhance consumer safety.*

*SB577 will become effective January 1, 2003.*

### **What is the California Health Freedom Coalition?**

Millions of California citizens visit alternative health care providers each year and studies show that this number is increasing. However, according to California's Medical Practice Act, anyone who performs any kind of diagnosis or treatment for any kind of mental or physical ailment, injury, or condition must have medical licensure - even if their treatment is not harmful. This means that practitioners of unlicensed therapies - including massage therapy, homeopathy, naturopathy, herbalism, ayurveda, reiki, native or other indigenous forms of healing, and even yoga - may, at least technically, be in violation of the law.

The goal of the California Health Freedom Coalition (CHFC) is to pass [SB577](#), legislation that will remedy this problem. SB577 will narrow the scope of the Medical Practice Act so that unlicensed healers will be able to operate openly and freely - as long as they do not engage in certain potentially dangerous medical activities or claim to be licensed medical doctors.

[www.californiahealthfreedom.org](http://www.californiahealthfreedom.org)