

April 28, 2008

Dear advocate for health care choice:

Fifteen years ago, a heroic group of North Carolinians won the right to access to the healthcare of their choosing including alternative and non-conventional therapies through legislative action that grew from attacks by the NC Medical Board against physicians who provided these services. The NC General Statute was changed to read, "The Board shall not revoke the license of or deny a license to a person solely because of that person's practice of a therapy that is experimental, nontraditional, or that departs from acceptable and prevailing medical practices unless, by competent evidence, the Board can establish that the treatment has a safety risk greater than the prevailing treatment or that the treatment is generally not effective."

Fifteen years later, the NC Medical Board has attacked this law broadside in its recent ruling against Dr. Rashid Buttar, the president of the North Carolina Integrative Medical Society. Without complaints of any harm to patients and with evidence strongly indicating benefit, a three member panel comprised of Dr. Janelle Rhyne, the current president and two other members indicated that they would recommend that the full Board adopt their ruling - that Dr. Buttar's license be suspended indefinitely.

Their reason for handing out such severe punishment and essentially taking away a person's livelihood and denying his patients access to treatments is because he uses non-conventional treatments for cancer; treatments that one of the Board member's openly acknowledged that he didn't understand. This is in complete contempt of the above law that was passed in 1993 and sends a chill throughout the NC Integrative Medical community. The Board has essentially said that since it doesn't understand these therapies, it will simply shut down physicians who perform them.

The organization that accomplished the work of creating the 1993 law that should be protecting physicians is Carolinians for Health Care Access. You will soon be getting information on how you can assist in building a network of citizens who wish to have access to non-conventional, alternative, nutritional, and holistic therapies of all kinds as long as they are generally accepted and in use within the Integrative medical community and have benefits that outweigh risks. In the mean time, more urgent help is needed to make your voice be heard by the other members of the NC Medical Board.

The NC Medical Board will meet again May 21 – 23 at which time the ruling against Dr. Buttar will be taken up by the full Board. It would be helpful if the voices of the public could be heard by the Board during this time period to help them understand that there is a significant desire for access to these type health care options. Your help will have a huge impact because if the message is sent loud enough now for the full Board to reconsider the ruling and dismiss the case, then it is unlikely that other doctors who are

also in the line of fire will not have to face the same situation. Action now is critically important.

Enclosed are some sample comments that may help you in formulating your words, though it is important that this be your letter with your feelings and it not appear to be copies of the same letter.

The letters should be sent to each of the following board members at this address: NC Medical Board, P.O. Box 20007, Raleigh, NC 27619-0007

Janelle A. Rhyne, MD

President
Wilmington
Term Expires
October 31, 2009

George L. Saunders, III, MD

President Elect
Shallotte
Term Expires
October 31, 2009

Ralph C. Loomis, MD

Secretary
Asheville
Term Expires
October 31, 2008

Donald E. Jablonski, DO

Treasurer
Etowah
Term Expires
October 31, 2008

Pamela Blizzard

Raleigh
Term Expires
October 31, 2009

Thomas R. Hill, MD

Hickory
Term Expires
October 31, 2010

Thelma C. Lennon

Raleigh
Term Expires
October 31, 2008

John B. Lewis, Jr, LLB

Farmville
Term Expires
October 31, 2010

H. Arthur McCulloch, MD

Charlotte
Term Expires
October 31, 2008

Peggy Robinson, PA-C

Durham
Term Expires
October 31, 2009

William A. Walker, MD

Charlotte
Term Expires
October 31, 2010

Janice E. Huff, MD

Charlotte, NC
Term Expires
October 31, 2010

Please move quickly to get these letters out and express your desire to continue to have access to quality innovative healthcare in North Carolina.

Sincerely,