Hello, my name is Okee Westbrook. I am from Harbor Springs, Michigan.

I support the Repeal of PA333

About three years ago at Bay Tennis & Fitness, the search for a nutritional program to bring into the facility began.

This happened because our clients and community were asking for this guidance.

When calling to get more information on how we could use the government's My Plate program materials, I was denied for not being a registered dietician.

It was suggested I send people to the internet to use My Plate resources on their own.

I was told we can post a poster about My Plate, but not teach it.

This is not the kind of help our clients were looking for!

And this is not complicated medical information!

Dieticians are not readily available in our community and would quite costly for the kind of nutrition coaching services our clients are looking for - uncomplicated help on how to eat to stay healthy and prevent disease.

Our center went on to explore more options and found a one year vocational program that provided a great foundation in healthy, whole food nutrition and how to coach people to adopt healthier lifestyles.

But under the licensing law, if we were helping someone who had any health issue they wanted to address with food, we would be breaking the law.

How many people in America don't have some kind of health issue?

Three of us from the staff enrolled together in this program, the owner, Fitness Director and myself. (Recently a member of our staff graduated from the same program, creating a fourth health coach on staff.)

Out of our education together and like minded vision of what fitness being about the whole person, Whole Nutrition and Fitness was created.

We teach our clients to protect their health by practicing prevention through diet.

We encourage team care.

We have created referral relationships with small, independent, local physicians and other professionals to support them in this process.

We know when a potential client needs something we aren't trained to do and we refer out to other practitioners, whether it is an MD, DO, Rheumatologist, or Psychologist.

Being in Harbor Springs, the demographic of our customers changes drastically during the year.

Our beautiful resort community attracts people from all over the country during our summer months.

Clients from states where monopoly laws exist are excited to work with a person instead of trying to piece together their own program from the internet *and* are happy to spend money in Michigan for these services. Nutrition and fitness together.

You can't have one without the other. It is this kind of marriage PA333 destroys.

PA333 legalizes a monopoly that will drive more people out of Michigan.

Many practitioners will be forced to leave.

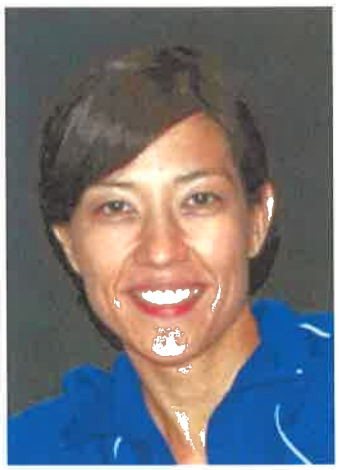
People like myself and my colleagues who have chosen to stay, roll up their sleeves and get through this mess of an economy that has been created by job loss.

My husband being a PGA golf pro has the choice to work anywhere. The majority of states do not make what I am doing illegal. I should be able to give back to my community.

We will have to pursue relocation should I not be able to practice evidence based nutrition in my health coaching.

Our families are here, our community is here. Michigan has already lost enough people due to the economy.

Please vote to repeal this licensing law.

Thank you for your time.

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