

[DATE]

[ADDRESS]

Dear __

We are reaching out to you because you are listed as a major benefactor to the Wikimedia Foundation, the parent organization hosting the international Wikipedia encyclopedia. We, the signatories to this petition, represent a large international network of tens of thousands of board certified physicians, organizations and associations within the field of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM), certified or licensed practitioners thereof, professors, individual medical and health experts, and attorneys, who protest the acrimonious treatment of alternative medical professions on the online encyclopedia.

We are launching a campaign to reach out to the Foundation's major benefactors and donors and to gratefully request that they discontinue their donations, grants and support to the Wikimedia Foundation. Our motive for taking this course of action has been a last resort because all other efforts and strategies to correct the falsities, inaccuracies and vengeful narrative about our professions have either failed or been ignored. The Foundation has refused to assume responsibility and to be held accountable for the abuse being perpetrated by individuals and groups promoting antagonistic ideologies against complementary and alternative medical therapies and its leading proponents. The consequence has been that the scientific reputations and efficacy of these therapies, and the careers of those practicing them are being seriously undermined and damaged. Based upon the evidence it is our contention that this is intentional.

While countless people around the world have benefitted from the breadth and scope of knowledge the encyclopedia provides, over the years it has come under growing criticism for its bias and lack of objectivity on many subjects that have a direct impact on people's health and well-being. In addition, the culture of harassment that occurs on Wikipedia editing pages, or Talk Pages, has become uncontrollable. In May, the Foundation finally addressed this systemic problem and announced it would begin to ban editors who are charged with abusive behavior towards other editors. Unfortunately this new ruling, as admirable as it is, ignores the volumes of misinformation and libelous language already found on the encyclopedia's pages.

Starting around 2006, a group of volunteer Wikipedia editors and organizations that identify themselves as "Skeptics" recognized that the encyclopedia's "open source" and anonymity policies offered an enormous opportunity for them to propagandize their message of radical scientific materialism and could serve as a platform to discredit all forms of non-conventional therapies. This includes Chiropractic, acupuncture, homeopathy, naturopathy and botanical medicine, energy medicine and energy psychology, nutritional therapies, traditional Chinese medicine, India Ayurvedic medicine, quantum medicine, various modalities of massage and physical therapy, non-drug based supplements, etc. During the passage of years, the presence of and influence of Skeptic editors has increased exponentially.

Distinct Skeptic groups, such as Guerilla Skepticism on Wikipedia and Quackwatch, now dominate and control a large swathe of Wikipedia entries that deal directly with CAM and the biographies of respectable, qualified practitioners and advocates of these natural medical disciplines. Categorically, these entries display extreme bias and a flagrant lack of objectivity that violates Wikipedia's stated editorial standards such as neutrality. Renowned doctors who espouse a complementary approach to medicine and healing are commonly called "quacks" or "charlatans." CAM therapies are described as "pseudoscience" and/or "quackery". Such derogatory terms are not permitted on creditable encyclopedias. Despite the volumes of peer-reviewed studies and articles cataloged in the National Institutes of Health's National Library of Medicine confirming the efficacy of these non-conventional therapies, Skeptic editors rely solely upon those studies that may be used for censure and defamation. Since Skeptics now control and monitor these health subjects there is no opportunity for transparency and honest debate to correct gross errors.

Skepticism's assault against CAM therapies is contrary to contemporary trends in medicine. In 2019, the World Health Organization reported that "traditional and complementary medicine is an important and often underestimated health resource with many applications, especially for the prevention and management of lifestyle-related chronic diseases and in meeting the health needs of ageing populations." Most prestigious American medical schools have a department for complementary and alternative medicine or include these subjects in their curriculum. A government survey estimates that 62 percent of US adults use some form of alternative medicine annually. On the other hand, Skeptic organizations have been publicly hostile to this trend and have made their animosity known on Wikipedia.

Unlike other legitimate encyclopedias, such as the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and the *Columbia Encyclopedia*, there is no oversight or accountability for who can write content and edit on Wikipedia pages. Most Wikipedia editors are anonymous. Their identities and expertise on the subjects they edit are unknown. In the majority of the cases for alternative medicine's entries, senior and administrative editors have no medical-related background whatsoever.

Over the years, voluminous complaints have been communicated and/or filed to the Foundation, including lawsuits, about the gross violations in Wikipedia's editorial policies, misinformation and inflammatory and potentially libelous language. Sadly, such requests in almost all cases go unheeded. A conclusion may be drawn that the Foundation may support Skeptics' ideological beliefs. There is some evidence that the Foundation, and/or some of its Board members, endorse Skeptics' tenets and activities, including providing protection and privileges for them to carry out their agenda.

The attached Fact Sheet provides some glaring examples of excerpts from Wikipedia entries for CAM therapeutic practices and notable personal biographies that exemplify our claims.

Again, we appreciate your decision to withhold future donations to the Foundation. In our opinion, this petition represents a call to hold the Foundation to a higher moral principle of conscience. We hope that by inspiring enough of Wikipedia's benefactors to cease financial support, a message will be sent to the Foundation that it needs to assume its leadership role in performing due diligence to clean up the

culture of falsehoods and malicious intent that has plagued the encyclopedia's medicine and health pages for far too long.

Sincerely