

From: [Rep. Benjamin Nageak](#)
To: [Mary Schlosser](#)
Subject: FW: HB328
Date: Monday, March 10, 2014 1:50:08 PM

From: Cheri Zepp [mailto:cherizepp@hotmail.com]
Sent: Friday, March 07, 2014 9:42 AM
To: Rep. Benjamin Nageak
Subject: HB328

Good morning Representative Nageak,

I have not yet had the pleasure to meet you, but I have been working with your amazing staff – Mary Schlosser. I would like to offer my support for House Bill 328.

Thank you for meeting with several members of the coalition several weeks ago, and hearing what we had to say about why it is so important to have licensure for massage therapists in the State of Alaska. We want to thank you again for sponsoring this bill, and we appreciate your time and your staff's time on this bill.

I want to express to you that I, personally, fully understand the implications of fees and requirements of education that will be imposed. I graduated from massage school in Texas, where I received my license after taking the state exam and I kept my license current for 7 years. I paid \$250.00 per year (not biennial) to the State of Texas, and this fee did not hurt my business at all. I decided to let my Texas license lapse because I was not considered licensed in my home state, and the constant denials from insurance companies increased year after year -- all the same reason - I am not considered licensed, because we do not have a law here in Alaska that requires a license to operate. Even though I attend massage training and graduated with honors.

I have paid yearly fees, attended continuing education classes and am current with information pertaining to my trade. I do not feel impending fees, nor, the requirement of education will be a burden on my pocketbook. I also am a member of the Associated Bodywork and Massage Professionals. That membership allows me Liability Insurance or Medical Malpractice worth millions should I hurt someone in the course of my work.

I currently provide employment for 5-6 therapists at my studio, Chez Sante' Massage Therapy.

They are contracted to work at my studio, and I require them to obtain a business license to operate in the State of Alaska. They are also required to obtain liability insurance, and are encouraged to take continuing education.

My first priority is my clients -- their safety is number one, and so I believe once this becomes required in our state we can weed out the sex offenders who are currently slipping through cracks. Currently, anyone can hang a shingle out that allows them to be a "massage therapist" and I'm certain that there are already sex offenders working on innocent people. I question why any professional massage therapist would not want a law that helps to protect their clients.

I feel that the bill in its current state is satisfactory and needs no further amendments, and I am very comfortable with the language.

Thank you again Representative Nageak.

Sincerely,

Cheri Zepp
Chez Sante' Massage Therapy
(907) 723-5054

My name is Patricia Collins. I have been a full time massage therapist in Juneau for 11 years. I have a business license, liability insurance and pay appropriate sales tax. I do not see HB 328 increasing the fees that I charge to my clientele. The costs associated with the continuing education are costs I already gladly pay. The additional cost of state professional licensure, I consider minor. HB 328 brings us into closer aligned with the massage regulations that other states currently have. It may provide therapists with the ability to directly bill health insurance for services. It will also assist in providing the public with some assurance that their massage therapist has basic training in safe and sanitary practices. I support the passing of HB 328 with three amendments.

The first amendment I suggest is in **Section 08.61.030 (3), Qualifications for licensure**. Currently the bill states education must come from a board approved "school". I believe the words "**or board approved apprenticeship program**" should be added after the word school. The US Secretary of Education considers massage therapy a vocational trade. Board approved apprenticeship is a common route of education for vocational trades. Even though there are hundreds of massage schools in the country, COMTA, the federally recognized accrediting agency for massage therapy, has only 61 accredited programs in 27 states. All massage therapists hope that the education that we receive will be respected in the future or in other states but at this point there are no guarantees. Both Hawaii and Florida have board approved apprenticeship in their state legislation. Our state has many communities that will never be large enough to support a massage school. If our legislation does not include board approved apprenticeship future therapists will have no choice other than relocation for 6 months to a year of their life in order to receive training. This will be an option for some but it will not be an option for others. The lack of apprenticeship will limit who will be able to enter the field in the future.

The other amendments I suggest are related to safety of the public. It is important that persons performing massage and / or bodywork have basic knowledge of safe and sanitary practices. There are some who say that this bill is to regulate massage and the exempt modalities are a different field which they categorize as bodywork. For many reasons I feel this split is illogical for our state. Exempt modalities are taught in the same massage schools as non-exempt modalities and therapists mix modalities considering all of them as part of their massage practice. The public, in general, will not consider the different modalities as separate & will assume they all have some kind of oversight. Our state does not have a large enough population of massage therapists and bodyworkers to successfully support two different boards. I believe that with two simple amendments we will be able to give the board that is created by this bill needed oversight of modalities that pose the greatest risk to our public.

Section 08.61.080 (10) - This section exempts Rolfing and structural integration. The Rolf Institute is a well known bodywork school with very high standards. In order to advertise Rolfing you must be a student or graduate of the Rolf Institute. A person who is educated in principals that were developed by Ida Rolf but has not gone to the Rolf

Institute is considered to practice structural integration. Unfortunately, there is no federal oversight as to who teaches, what is taught, who performs or what is performed under the umbrella term “structural integration”. The way this bill is currently written there will be no state oversight of structural integration. I believe we should remove item (10) or rewrite it to apply to students and graduates of the Rolf Institute only.

Section 08.61.080 (12) - This section lists a broad range of modalities that may be classified as energy work and Asian bodywork. Some of these modalities do not use pressure applied to the body but some do. Item (7) in this same Section (08.61.080) already exempts persons performing techniques that do not pressure or manipulate soft tissue in the human body. To specifically list non-force modalities in item (12) is a redundancy. I am further concerned about this exemption because there are weekend workshops and short term programs in the listed modalities that are open to anyone in the public to take. There is no federal oversight regarding who teaches, what is taught, who takes the classes or what overall safety and sanitation knowledge a practitioner has. With the current wording of the bill there will not be any state oversight of potentially harmful bodywork modalities. I recommend removing item (12) from the proposed bill. Non-invasive modalities will remain exempt under item (7). Modalities that involve pressure or manipulation of body tissue will have oversight.

I thank everyone for the time that they spend on this piece of legislation and the development of the Alaska State Massage & Bodywork Board.

- Patricia Collins
mistymountainmassage@gmail.com



amta
american **massage therapy** association

500 davis street, suite 900 | evanston, il 60201-4695 | phone 847.864.0123 | toll free 877.905.2700 | fax 847.864.1176

email: info@amtamassage.org | web: www.amtamassage.org

August 25th, 2011

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA), we want to express our support for licensure of the massage therapy profession in the State of Alaska. AMTA is a professional membership association representing more than 56,000 massage therapists nationally, including more than 300 massage therapists in Alaska. Our association has represented the massage therapy profession since 1943.

AMTA works for fair, consistent and effective licensing both to ensure the right to practice of massage therapists and to protect the public. AMTA believes in balanced regulation that provides for minimal standards of practice to ensure professionalism and provide public confidence in massage therapy.

Currently, 43 states and the District of Columbia provide for the regulation of massage therapy and most provide a Practice Act that requires licensure to practice. With growing number of states turning to licensure, we see that it works for the profession and public.

For more information on the reasons to support licensure of the massage therapy profession, please see the attached information sheet.

Massage therapy licensing embodies the principles and values AMTA upholds, and it includes content and practice standards we believe must be part of massage licensing in all states. Only by enacting this type of law, and by requiring licensure for massage therapists, can we ensure practitioners have met minimum competency standards, established through formal education, training and examination requirements.

Thank you for your time. If we can provide any additional information or be of any assistance, please feel free to contact us.

Respectfully,

Chris A. Studebaker
Director, Government & Industry Relations



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**PROVIDING ALASKANS WITH
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FELLOW OF AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS
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DIPLOMATE OF THE AMERICAN BOARD OF NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY
ESTRADA J. BERNARD, JR, M.D.
DIPLOMATE OF THE AMERICAN BOARD OF NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY
FELLOW OF AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS
MARSHALL TOLBERT, M.D.
ENDOVASCULAR NEUROSURGERY
CANDACE HICKEL, MPAS, PA-C
DARCIE CRAVENS, MPAS, PA-C

March 5, 2012

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter in support of licensure of massage therapists in Alaska. As a referring practitioner, I feel that it is safer for my patients to be evaluated by a properly trained massage therapist who is held to a specified standard of training. Massage therapists play an integral role in the evaluation and management of disease. Licensure will help to ensure that basic entry-level education and examination standards are met. The majority of other states have already taken this approach to ensure the safety of their patients, massage therapists, and medical community.

I strongly support the stance to create a licensure requirement for massage therapy in Alaska. If you have any questions in regards to this letter feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Darcie K. Cravens

Darcie K. Cravens, PA-C

DKC/jh

Timothy I. Cohen M.D.

Timothy I. Cohen, M.D.



CLINIC OF
CHIROPRACTIC HEALTH

JAMES F. HESTON, D.C.

141 W. PIONEER AVE.
HOMER, ALASKA 99603
(907) 235-7146
FAX (907) 235-7186
EMAIL: CHIRO@XYZ.NET

February 27, 2014

To Whom It May Concern;

I am writing this letter in support of HB 328 and SB 188, thereby establishing a regulatory board for the profession of Massage Therapy. As a Chiropractor, I have worked along side many Massage Therapists who have enhanced the care provided, aiding in the advancement of the patients' healing process. Standards and regulations for this profession need to be established and monitored.

The Chiropractic and Massage Therapy professions have been working together for many years and it is past time for Massage Therapists to be self-regulated. The passing of these bills will be a positive step for this profession to regulate itself through licensure, and establishing and promoting a high professional standard of ethical and moral conduct. This board will help protect the health, welfare, and safety of the public through regulatory standard establishment, enforcement, and continuing education requirements for re-licensure. More and more, third party payers for health services are requiring that Massage Therapists have some certificate of competency before considering reimbursement for services rendered. This board and the licenses it will issue will fill this void for many of those Therapists who do not currently hold any certification or license. The requirement of continuing education will help keep licensees knowledgeable in technique and on track with moral concerns.

It is well established that Massage Therapy can greatly aid in the healing process of injury to the human body. The profession of Massage Therapy can only move forward and gain support through regulation and the establishment of conduct and moral guidelines.

Sincerely,

James F. Heston, D.C.

Chairman of the Board of Chiropractic Examiners



To whom it may concern:

On February 27, 2014 the Alaska Nurses Association re-affirmed our support for the licensing of the massage therapists in the State of Alaska. As a profession that has been licensed for many years we know the importance of having a board, regulations and statutes to protect both the public and our practice.

Please accept this letter of support for licensing this very important profession for the delivery of health and wellness for Alaskans.

“An Act establishing a Board of Massage Therapists; relating to the licensing of massage therapists; and providing for an effective date.”

House Bill 328 and Senate Bill 188 seek to provide industry and educational standards to promote a code of ethics, public safety, self-regulation, accountability, business development, grievance process and therapy access.

Currently Alaska is one of six states not regulating the massage therapy profession. A professional code of ethics develops a scope of practice including education, contraindications, body system, potential results, and above all safety.

Licensing endorses small business development by allowing a therapist to become a preferred provider and bill insurance directly versus going through chiropractors, physical therapists and physicians.

Creating a standard of practice allows consumers to educate themselves to the standard of care they should expect and helps them find the most appropriate therapy style for their individual care.

This bill encourages greater professional opportunities for therapists. With the massage therapy profession growing at an average rate of 120 therapists each year, now is the time to create clear industry standards for the health and safety of Alaskans.

This legislation is in response to 84% of surveyed massage therapists supporting state licensure. I support their efforts and I ask you to please join me in support of this vital fundamental legislation.

Respectfully,

Jana Shockman, RN, CCRN-CSC
Alaska Nurses Association
Board of Directors-President



Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

25188 Genesee Trail Rd, Ste 200
Golden, CO 80401
800-458-2267
fax 800-667-8260
www.abmp.com

February 7, 2014

To: Alaska State Legislators

From: Jean Robinson, Government Relations Director

Re: Massage Therapy Practice Act – Support of Draft Bill 12-9-13

I am pleased to provide this letter of support on behalf of Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals (ABMP). ABMP is the largest national professional association for massage therapists with more than 82,000 members nationwide, including more than 250 members in Alaska. We provide professional liability insurance, business resources, professional publications, and legislative and regulatory advocacy for our members.

We have been engaged in the development of a draft bill in Alaska since 2007. Our priorities for the bill have included protecting current practitioners right to practice without having to obtain additional education or pass an exam, reasonable entry-level requirements for licensure that are and consistent with the rest of the country, and incorporating best practices from lessons learned from the forty-four states and three territories that currently regulate the profession.

I am delighted to report that we have come a long way. ABMP supports the Work Draft of the bill dated 12-9/13 (with a few very minor edits). We now comfortably ask for your support as well. Thank you for your attention to this matter. I would be happy to answer any questions and can be reached at jean@abmp.com or 800-458-2267 extension 645.



Arctic Chiropractic

PO Box 894
Barrow AK 99723
907-852-3099(o)
907-852-3255(f)

Life is good when you're pain
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Justin J Petersen DC

March 10, 2014

To whom it may concern;

As a chiropractor currently practicing in Alaska, and as a former licensed massage therapist, I have a unique perspective on the current proposal under review. I also happen to be working in Barrow presently and therefore can bring some additional understanding to this proposal and how it affects Alaskan's living in remote areas.

As one of the few remaining states to implement a licensing board and regulations and procedures for massage therapists within the State, it is long overdue. Without these types of procedures in place, anyone could present themselves as a Massage Therapist. The public at large believes them to have some sort of training to ensure the proper employment of massage techniques, but they would be mistaken in many cases. This unfortunately could lead to unsafe and unethical practices.

Additionally, due to the extremes in climate in Alaska, massage therapy is a very effective therapeutic technique which is of great benefit to Alaskan's. Unfortunately some insurance companies will not currently cover these services when it is not provided by someone who is licensed, and therefore trained appropriately and regulated in regard to ethical and professional conduct. Implementing a State board to license and regulate this profession is necessary in providing for the needs of many Alaskan's as then these services would be more likely to be covered by the insurance they currently carry.

For the safety, and improved standard of care this would provide to all the residents of Alaska, it is my professional opinion that the regulation of this particular profession is of paramount importance and lend my full support to this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Justin J Petersen DC



ALASKA NATIVE MEDICAL CENTER

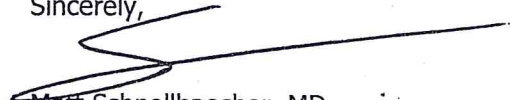


4315 Diplomacy Drive
Cardiology Department
Anchorage, AK 99508
February 12, 2012

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in support of the effort to establish a licensing board for massage therapy in the state of Alaska. It has been my experience that massage therapy offers great benefits complementary to the allopathic medical approach. It is in the best interest of patients and massage therapists alike that the public has confidence in their training and that professional standards are enumerated and obeyed. The establishment of a Board of Massage Therapists and licensure requirement is a crucial first step. Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Matt Schnellbaecher, MD
Cardiology Director



amta
american **massage therapy** association®

Alaska Chapter

The Alaska Massage Therapy Association – Alaska Chapter (AK-AMTA), supports licensure of massage therapists in Alaska. Currently there are only six states (including Alaska) that do not have a comprehensive statewide licensure requirement for massage therapists. Licensure of Alaska's massage therapists enhances public safety, and promotes small business development.

Massage therapists in Alaska are only regulated at a local level, and only in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Palmer and Valdez. Statewide licensure provides the public with the knowledge that their massage therapist has been properly trained, and is current with their continuing education. Licensure also provides a way to discipline individuals that claim to be massage therapists, but are not properly trained or licensed.

Licensure will also provide massage therapists with the ability to bill insurance directly, allowing small, independent massage therapy practices to grow.

During 2013, a coalition of massage therapists coordinated several meetings, and conducted a survey of massage therapists in Alaska. The survey showed overwhelming support among massage therapist for licensure in the state.

Windy Jurik
President AMTA-AK

House Bill 328, Senate Bill 188

“An Act establishing a Board of Massage Therapists; relating to the licensing of massage therapists; and providing for an effective date.”

House Bill 328 and Senate Bill 188 seek to provide industry and educational standards to promote a code of ethics, public safety, self-regulation, accountability, business development, grievance process and therapy access.

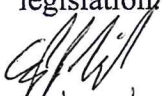
Currently Alaska is one of six states not regulating the massage therapy profession. A professional code of ethics develops a scope of practice including education, contraindications, body system, potential results, and above all safety.

Licensing endorses small business development by allowing a therapist to become a preferred provider and bill insurance directly versus going through chiropractors, physical therapists and physicians.

Creating a standard of practice allows consumers to educate themselves to the standard of care they should expect and helps them find the most appropriate therapy style for their individual care.

This bill encourages greater professional opportunities for therapists. With the massage therapy profession growing at an average rate of 120 therapists each year, now is the time to create clear industry standards for the health and safety of Alaskans.

This legislation is in response to 84% of surveyed massage therapists supporting state licensure. I support their efforts and I ask you to please join me in support of this vital fundamental legislation.


Jeff Williams
801 Williams Ave
Anchorage, AK 99504

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4305 Hayes St. Unit A
Anchorage, AK 99503

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*Jacqueline Ward
PO Box 91110
Anchorage AK 99509*

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Ashley R. Cunningham
12946 Norak Pl.
Anchorage, Ak 99516

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Amanda Unser
8071 ROVENNA ST

Anchorage AK 99518

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Megan M.S. Detzels
3655 Burl Ct
Anchorage, AK 99504

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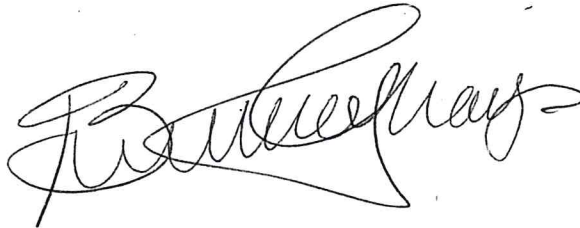
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Billie Gray", with a stylized, flowing script.

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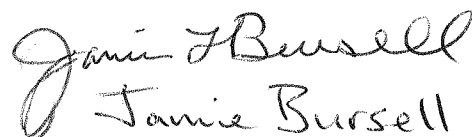
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Jamie Bursell
18695 Pt Stephens Rd
Juneau AK 99801

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JASON CLIFTON



02/28/14

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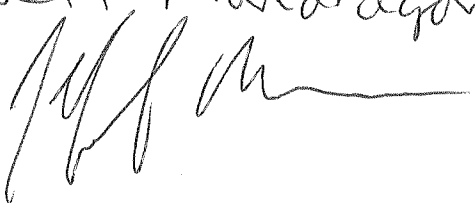
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Sandy Sheridan
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Apt. B
Douglas, AK 99824
Sandy Sheridan

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168 Tray Ave

Juneau AK 99801

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Ann Gifford

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NORMA FLEER *W. Speck*
3151 Pioneer Ave
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Terri Campbell 2/26/14

*Terri Campbell
437 W. 1st St
Juneau, AK 99801*

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6745 Marguerite
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801 Dixon St.
Juneau, AK 99801

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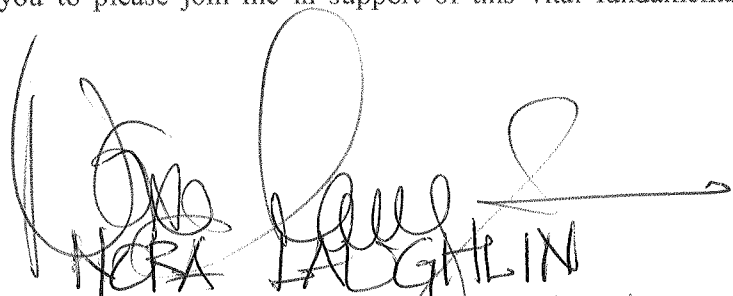
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Douglas 99824

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LISA E. WARD

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99801

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Kari ~~#~~ Monagle

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PO Box 32203

Juneau, AK 99803

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Juneau AK 99802

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Robert Ceson

3004 Blueberry Hills Rd.

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723-0806

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Peggy Bray

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Branca Carpeneti Feb. 25, 2014

634 Seward St. Juneau, AK 99801

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Lauri Heggen

2-25-14

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