

Crystal Koeneman

From: Ed Toal <edtoal@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2018 10:58 PM
To: Rep. Sam Kito
Subject: HB275

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Representative Kito,

I am writing to express my opposition to HB275. I hope there will be an opportunity for public comment.

While I support the continuation of the massage therapy license at the state level, I have disturbing information about the board and believe it is in the public interest to allow it to sunset. The licensing function would be better administered by the Department thus avoiding much drama and legal liability.

I will spare you the details of why I believe the board is acting in bad faith unless you ask. I just want to make you aware that there is a growing movement among the massage therapy community to oppose passage of this bill in its present form. If public comment is allowed I will participate from the LIO in Anchorage.

Thank you,

Edward Toal
Licensed Massage Therapist
Certified Rolfer
3302 Lois Drive
Anchorage, AK 99517
907.244-8404

Crystal Koeneman

From: Yael Hickok <wpmalaska@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2018 9:58 AM
To: Rep. Sam Kito
Subject: HB 275 concerns

Good Morning Mr. Kito,

I have been a massage therapist in Alaska for about 20 years. I am currently licensed under the new state requirements. I was part of the AMTA board that originally pushed for state licensing. I was reluctant to add licensing requirements because I dislike excessive government involvement. However, I recognized that there could be a direct benefit to massage therapists in being able to more easily bill insurance, and in public protection from unlawful sex trafficking and prostitution done in the name of massage.

My position has now shifted, and I would prefer to **continue licensing, but without a massage board.**

- I have seen **no benefit** from the state massage board. Massage 'parlors' continue to thrive.
- Their review of applications is **arbitrary and subject to personal biases.**
- They **take way too long** in reviewing and approving licenses. My information was submitted in June 2016 and I did not receive my license until December 2016.
- The **cost of our license is outrageously high.** \$610 for the initial license and then \$410 every two years. In contrast, physical and occupational therapists have similar numbers of state licensees to massage therapists and pay \$390 for their initial license and \$240 for renewal.

Lastly, I know that more massage therapists in the state are able to bill insurance because of state licensing; but they **could continue to do so without the board** being involved, delaying our licenses, and adding excessively to our licensing costs.

I would encourage you to promote state massage therapy licensing but without the professional board. Another profession that follow this route in Alaska is acupuncture.

Please reply with your thoughts on this issue. I greatly appreciate your time.

Thank you,

Yael Hickok

907-529-1088

wpmalaska@gmail.com

Workplace Massage

Pili Goddard-Vaughan

Advanced Healing Arts

3820 Lake Otis Parkway suite 106
Anchorage, AK 99508
(907)441-6075
pilibone@gmail.com

January 19, 2018

Dear House Labor & Commerce Chair, Vice Chair, Members and Alternates,

I am writing as a professional bodyworker (massage and myofascial therapist) in Anchorage for the past 20 years. I attended the UAA program for massage therapy and graduated back in 1999. I love my occupation. I feel honored to serve my clients, help them with their pain, offer them an alternative to pain medication, and provide a safe and healthy stress reduction option. I have worked in athletic spas, chiropractic clinics and now have a private practice.

I am writing today to ask that HB 275 not be extended. In the few years the Massage Board has existed, it has, in my opinion, not bettered my profession or my situation personally. In fact, the exorbitant cost has taken money that I would have put towards continuing education, which, I believe, is the most effective way to raise the standards of our profession.

The licensing of massage therapist by the municipality was already running background checks and fingerprints on massage therapists. The association that I get insurance coverage through, requires continuing education as well.

In the few years the Board has existed, it has caused me time and money. I was told with a Board, we would be eligible to bill insurance for services. We are still tied to doctors' and chiropractors' referrals, and I do not believe even the chiropractors' board (or PTs') pay the high fees that we do.

I am for licensing of massage therapists, I am for building a better profession and having ethical standards to adhere to. I have not seen how the Board of Massage Therapists has raised either of these.

Please know that I do not back this Board, and feel HB 275 should not be extended.

Thank you,

Pili Goddard-Vaughan LMT, CAMT II

From: [Edric Carrillo](#)
To: [Caitlyn Ellis](#)
Subject: FW: AK HB 275 Please do not support renewal of the board of massage therapists.
Date: Monday, January 22, 2018 10:59:16 AM

From: Michelle Niland [mailto:michelleniland@yahoo.com]

Sent: Monday, January 22, 2018 10:39 AM

To: Rep. Colleen Sullivan-Leonard <Rep.Colleen.Sullivan-Leonard@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sam Kito <Rep.Sam.Kito@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mike Chenault <Rep.Mike.Chenault@akleg.gov>

Subject: AK HB 275 Please do not support renewal of the board of massage therapists.

I have been practicing massage therapy in the the state of Alaska since 1999. My experience with licensing for MTs has been that while licensing serves good purposes, the board is unnecessary overhead for the state. The state licensing examiner listens to therapist concerns with a sincere interest in improving the process while the board simple creates delays in the licensing process and drives up costs. All that could be accomplished for the field can be accomplished in a more streamlined manner by dissolving the board and letting the state lisenisng examiner process licenses. Eliminating the board would save the state money.

I am also a member of the massage therapist Facebook page. I hear from my peers across the state daily on this matter. The overwhelming opinion of therapists from around the state seems to be that keeping licensing while dissolving the board would streamline the process and lose us nothing.

Thank you in advance for considering my opinion.

Michelle Latha
907-715-1540

Pili Goddard-Vaughan

Advanced Healing Arts

3820 Lake Otis Parkway suite 106
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(907)441-6075
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January 24, 2018

Dear House Labor & Commerce Chair, Vice Chair, Members and Alternates

I have, and support the public testimony that Yael Hickock gave, regarding the Board. I had introduced myself in the last letter, so for time sake, I will let you refer to that.

I want to point to something that myself, and the other opponents (all bodyworkers in Anchorage for the past 20 years) all noticed in the hearing Monday 1/22/18. Chris Curtis, the auditor, talked about how the Marijuana Control Board sent out a survey to Licensees and local government, to track it's effectiveness. She also reported that they got a 88% (government) and a 70% (licensed) response to the survey. We would like the Massage Therapy Board to conduct a similar survey. We feel that a more accurate representation would come from this.

In my opinion, many new therapists, and bodyworkers waiting for licensing, are not speaking up, due to the impact that this might have on the processing of their license.

To be very clear, I support licensing, and a Board, the right for us to bill insurance independently, and continuing Education standards. But, I do not support THIS Board, as it has conducted business. First and foremost in it's communication with the Licensees, and it's decision making process.

As I read through the documents in support of HB 275, I do see that the licensing and the Board are being lumped together. I am for Licensing of massage therapist, and bodyworkers, all through Alaska. I feel our profession does a great service, and feel that it should have standards and practices and ethical guidelines. The lumping of our profession, with the sex trade issue, is a frustrating one to me. The excessive fingerprinting and background checks I feel, do nothing to legitimate our profession, and are costly and time consuming to us.

I read many of the supporters discussing Continuing education standards, and yes, I believe it is necessary for personal and professional growth. The reality of continuing education in Alaska, is that it is very costly to have teachers and classes come to us, and vice versa. The average cost for 16 CEU's is between \$500.00-\$700.00 per year. So, for

new therapists, working to build their practices, the cost of the Licensing through the board seems more of a deterrent than a motivator for continuing education.

I feel this Board has not done an adequate job of communicating and involving the profession it is set up to serve. I believe Yael's survey showed that there is a discrepancy between the desire for licensing, and a desire for this Board to continue. I question that the Board estimated 1/2 of the number of massage therapists, set our fees to those numbers, and have been overloaded with processing and managing these numbers. Many therapists choose massage therapy as a part time profession, due to it's high demand physically. If the Board was so far off in estimating the number of people to be licensed, should not a reduction in fees be considered now?

I would ask again, before HB 275 is extended, that a survey be sent out to the 1000 plus Licensees that it is set up to regulate. I believe the Board should use it's surplus revenues to conduct this survey.

Thank you for your time,

Pili Goddard-Vaughan LMT, CAMT II

Advanced Healing Arts

3820 Lake Otis Parkway, suite 106

Anchorage, AK 99508

From: [Edric Carrillo](#)
To: [Caitlyn Ellis](#)
Subject: FW: Vote no on HB 275
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2018 11:54:10 AM

From: Karenina Brooks [mailto:artemismistress@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2018 11:22 AM
To: Rep. Sam Kito <Rep.Sam.Kito@akleg.gov>
Subject: Vote no on HB 275

Representative Sam Kito

Please vote no on HB 275 and allow the Board of Massage Therapists to sunset. I have been a massage therapist in Alaska since 2010. While licensing for massage therapists in Alaska is good, the board is not beneficial to me. In fact having a board costs me a lot of money and creates problems in delays of processing. My own experience has been frustrating when in communication with the board. They do not represent me or my needs. In several communications when expressing my thoughts they defend their stance rather than listen to how their ideas will effect other therapist. They had misplaced my fingerprints and they had lost my co workers fingerprints 3 times in a row.

Prior to being a LMT in Alaska I have also been licensed in several other states the process was fast and the cost was much less 150 for two years compared to 610 (to get started) and then 350ish every 2 years to continue I used ish because that isn't taking into consideration the fees for fingerprinting, first aid courses and continuing education. The chiropractors we work for pay less in fees and they make far more money then we do. I am very passionate about my work and it is a difficult industry to maintain a long sustainable career. The work is physically demanding and very dependent on my physical and emotional well being. The cost the board adds alone is a hardship on my quality of life. With the state leaning to raising taxes across the board and garnishing pfd I do not need another high cost just to be able to work. I am seriously considering moving out of state because of the high cost of living.

Also one of my colleagues Kim Greef was denied her license because she did not meet the grandfathering requirements. She owned a business focusing on yoga rather than massage (tho she still did massage) and since she was not an employee she did not meet the grandfathering requirement. She has served our community for over a decade facilitating a healthy healing space and is an excellent massage therapist with in depth knowledge of the body and its functions. The decision to deny her the right to practice is a great loss to our community.

Thank you,
Karenina Brooks

From: [Edric Carrillo](#)
To: [Caitlyn Ellis](#)
Subject: FW: Survey results for AK Massage Therapists
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2018 8:38:54 AM
Attachments: [Data_Q1_180125.pdf](#)
[Data_Q2_180125.pdf](#)
[Data_Q3_180125.pdf](#)
[Data_Q4_180125.pdf](#)

From: Yael Hickok [mailto:wpmalaska@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2018 7:55 AM

To: Rep. Sam Kito <Rep.Sam.Kito@akleg.gov>; Rep. Adam Wool <Rep.Adam.Wool@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Louise Stutes <Rep.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov>; Rep. Chris Birch <Rep.Chris.Birch@akleg.gov>; Rep. Gary Knopp <Rep.Gary.Knopp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Colleen Sullivan-Leonard <Rep.Colleen.Sullivan-Leonard@akleg.gov>

Subject: Survey results for AK Massage Therapists

Good morning,

You received an email last week from me stating my position and asking you to vote no on HB 275. I also testified at the committee meeting on Monday and shared with you that the majority of massage therapists concur with my view that the massage board has not been helpful to our profession.

When reading the public comments and support of the continued board I noticed that many of the letters were written by board members themselves. Quite a few of the other letters were canned letters that were copied and pasted; many of those being from massage clients. I believe that the candid responses of non-board massage therapists from throughout the state will hold a lot more weight than copied responses from board members or their clients.

Please take a few minutes to review the results of the survey. You'll see that the questions were not biased and were opened and shared with all massage therapists in the state including some who are currently retired. I was very disappointed to see that there was no such survey conducted by the legislative audit for the massage therapists and therefore conducted my own survey; being careful not to disclose my personal position in the process.

While I feel that licensing has benefits, I feel that the massage board was created with false information (we were originally told licensing with a board would only cost us \$200 every two years) and an outside agenda. It has caused a major problem financially for many massage therapists. The challenging economy we are now facing in our state has created more pressure on us and the exorbitant cost of licensing due to our board has put some therapists out of business and caused hardships for many of us.

Please allow the massage forward to Sunset. Our licensing administration can be easily conducted in the division. Our licensing cost will go down as well as the time it takes to receive our approved

licenses once submitted.

Thank you,
Yael Hickok, LMT
Chugiak, AK

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Workplace Massage

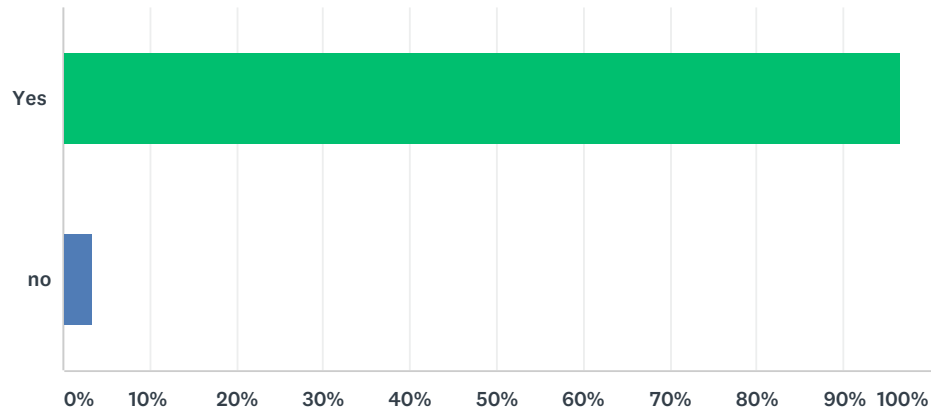


www.workplacemassage-ak.com

907-529-1088

Q1 Are you a massage therapist in Alaska?

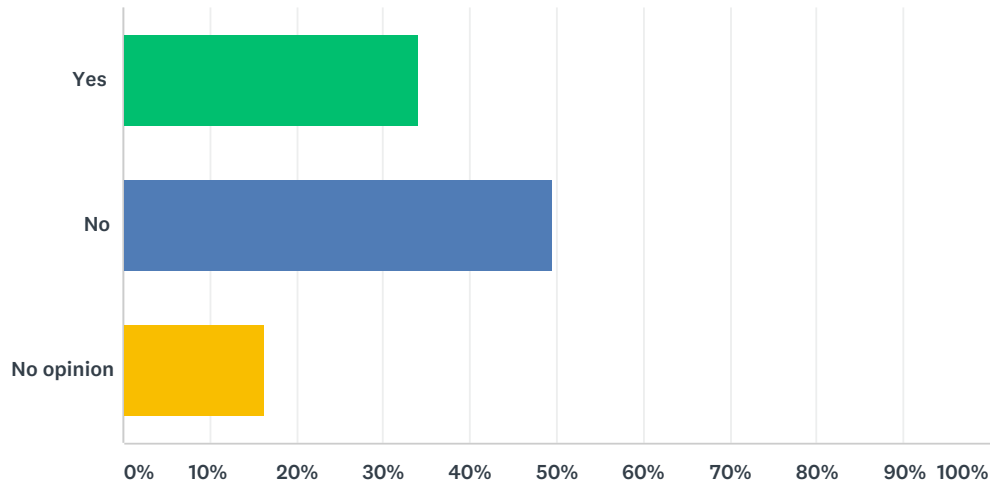
Answered: 123 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES
Yes	96.75%	119
no	3.25%	4
TOTAL		123

Q2 Have you benefited from state licensing for massage therapists?

Answered: 123 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	34.15%	42
No	49.59%	61
No opinion	16.26%	20
TOTAL		123

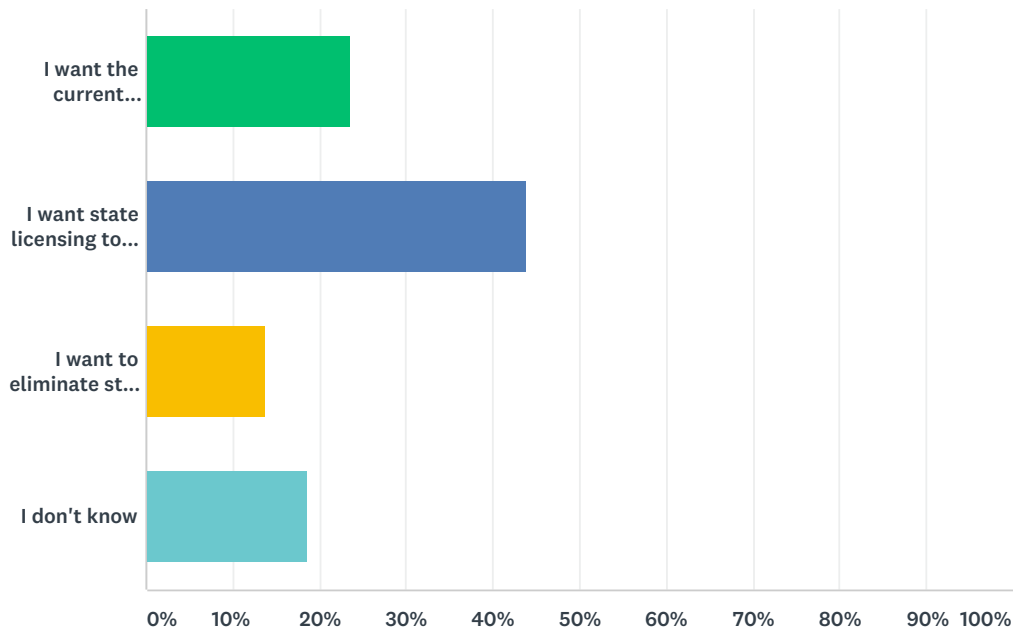
#	COMMENT (OPTIONAL)	DATE
1	I've paid more out of pocket for fees to stay practicing. You would think that the Board thought all of us MT's jumped onto the insurance band wagon for what we have to pay. There were many talented therapists who had to quit their passion just for this licensure law, how sad.	1/24/2018 11:41 AM
2	I guess I will once I start billing insurance myself	1/22/2018 6:59 PM
3	Licensing our own profession, independent from any other, is important. The cost was prohibitive for me to renew, but massage was no longer my primary source of income.	1/20/2018 11:05 AM
4	I was already busy and thriving before licensing	1/20/2018 12:08 AM
5	It's hard to say whether or not I have, what I do know is that it is the most expensive licensing for someone not considered a medical professional and it seems like ridiculous overkill.	1/19/2018 9:21 PM
6	Legitimizing our profession has been a god send. Yes there are fees and continuing education requirements but we all benefit from further education and the medical rights provided by having a legitimate board.	1/19/2018 9:16 PM
7	Since the state took over licensing, it was nothing but frustrating, due to the lack of organization & how long it took for the board to process applications. The fees are exorbitant.	1/19/2018 9:06 PM
8	Hard to say - I have only been an LMT since licensing was required. I don't bill insurance, which is what folks say is important, but I also don't really understand the other positive benefits. I don't ever hear about the good things the board is doing - just hear the negative.	1/19/2018 1:24 AM
9	I feel like we have a lot more continuing education options since the state licensing but that's it.	1/18/2018 11:00 PM
10	Licensure has increased our ability to bill insurance and to work independently. I have directly benefitted from the opportunity to work in a stand-alone therapeutic massage clinic.	1/18/2018 10:19 PM
11	Has created a few more hoops to jump through but not necessarily negative.	1/18/2018 9:32 PM

12	I have not try to do the medical billing for massage therapist directly so I can't say that I have not benefit from the licensing. One of the purpose for the licensing is to be able to bill the insurance directly so the massage therapist business increase from that point of view. However, wait time for the insurance reimbursement is 30 days or more which in the reality we do need income to pay bills monthly which effect our financial in a daily basis.	1/18/2018 6:28 PM
13	Insurance billing has increased business substantially.	1/18/2018 5:29 PM
14	I am happy I can offer superbills that my patients can self submit. I am paid and then they can submit the formal receipt so they receive the payment directly from their insurance company.	1/18/2018 4:46 PM
15	My clients have benefited from increased education by myself and others. Our income can and has increased due to higher expectations from therapists and billing availability.	1/18/2018 4:24 PM
16	The licensing process has been strenuous and expensive.	1/18/2018 3:12 PM
17	Billing improves with state licensed provider whether you bill yourself or are working for someone. State licensed providers cannot be discriminated against under ACA (is my understanding)	1/18/2018 9:27 AM
18	I think it's mostly been a huge hassle and was poorly executed from the start, it should have been better set-up before beginning.	1/18/2018 9:00 AM
19	In my small business and comunity I have seen only negative effects from licensing in Alaska.	1/18/2018 8:50 AM
20	I like that it brought increased public awareness. It increased the level of perceived professionalism slightly as a Health Care Profession. I did not see increased clientele. Billing insurance was supposed to be an option which basically turned into a disaster.	1/17/2018 9:58 PM
21	I suppose I have the option to bill insurance companies myself, but I have not done so and have no plans in the future to do so.	1/17/2018 2:15 PM
22	very financially harming to a part-timer...	1/17/2018 2:06 PM
23	I've seen nothing improve.	1/17/2018 2:00 PM
24	This license has provided no additional benefit. And is extremely expensive, way to expensive and provides absolutely no benefits.	1/17/2018 12:41 PM
25	soooo much has been confusing...the needs the;not needed. first you need fingerprints every year. this is ridiculous! I have massGED 20 YEARS AND NO MATTER WHO YOU TALK TO OVER THE PAST YEAR IN JUNEAU THEY EITHER CANNOT KEEP UP WITH THE DEMAND OF QUESTIONS OR ARE NOT CERTAIN. and there are still places of illegal massage... call girls...asian clubs etc..right out in the open. are they held to guidelines..?? nope they just keep on "practicing"	1/17/2018 11:01 AM
26	I moved out of state after fighting against the massage license Bill. I wanted to keep my Alaska license however I feel the cost and the requirements of the license are prohibitive.	1/17/2018 9:22 AM
27	But only because I do not bill health insurance myself rather I work for a chiropractor	1/17/2018 8:55 AM
28	Not currently practicing massage because of delay in board license processing. I'm not sure what to do while in limbo for (once again) another week, which I've been told for 4 months now.	1/17/2018 8:48 AM
29	I have never had a client ask if I was licensed.	1/17/2018 8:46 AM
30	It has thinned the herd.	1/17/2018 8:42 AM
31	Keeps the profession in check and protects our clientele	1/17/2018 8:38 AM
32	This has not done anything for my business but cost me money, and taken funds from my continuing education. It has not helped with insurance reimbursement for my business, as originally implied	1/17/2018 8:19 AM
33	I like that we all have the same license instead of each city having a different one.	1/17/2018 8:16 AM
34	Paid an arm and a leg and they surly don't know my name	1/17/2018 7:57 AM
35	I work very little and state licensing only takes more money out of my pocket.	1/17/2018 6:41 AM
36	I can bill insurance now that there is more of a standard for licensing.	1/17/2018 6:29 AM
37	I like some regulation. Some people are practicing with very low rates and they have no training at all. I am paying for my training, continuing education, insurance and others and these people are not	1/17/2018 4:07 AM

38	The fees are too high and the educational requirements are too weak to advance the profession.	1/17/2018 2:19 AM
39	I had to pay \$610 for licensing in 2016 then had to pay again for my licensing again 5 months later! No one informed me they were doing blocked year licensing?! I think licensing is good but paying these ridiculous prices makes no sense especially when there is no accountability for all the LMT's in this state that work illegally without licenses, so I pay the price and others don't.	1/17/2018 1:34 AM
40	I did not like the way licensing came about in AK--set up was more like a service and not a profession. Law should be like WA and OR---simply apply their laws here.	1/17/2018 12:57 AM
41	I didn't practice without one so I don't know if it had benefitted me personally. Its all I know.	1/17/2018 12:53 AM
42	No. In fact I've had way more strain on my finances.	1/17/2018 12:42 AM
43	My opinion is mixed. The high cost certainly doesn't serve me, but the possibility of more regulation creating more professional credibility to weed out the uneducated LMT and other interests, does.	1/17/2018 12:23 AM
44	I was licensed from FL before coming to Alaska. I have been doing massage for 43 years and have always been licensed.	1/17/2018 12:22 AM
45	For my private practice all licensing has done, has been to increase my state fees. I do not bill insurance.	1/16/2018 11:59 PM
46	As a part-time therapist, my wages are practically null and void with the outrageously high fees that are now required to keep one's license. I agree that the board started off with good intent, but the legal and financial hoops we have had to jump through are looking more and more arbitrary. So many excellent therapists have had to quit their practices, and in a field that is more of a calling than a job this is unacceptable. The public has also suffered as a result of the necessary price inflation for our services. I highly suggest the board be disassembled, and one day rebuilt by a group of people who are more diverse and less privileged, with a fairer perspective on what it means to work for a living.	1/16/2018 11:59 PM
47	More money and time spent now	1/16/2018 11:48 PM
48	There have been no meaningful results from the expensive licensing to therapists not interested in billing insurance companies.	1/16/2018 11:34 PM
49	The one time I had to renew my license, I was working only part time, & was barely able to make ends meet, much less come up with financing to renew my license.	1/16/2018 11:29 PM
50	I feel like we do need licensure, but the fees are absurd.	1/16/2018 11:20 PM
51	I never signed up for it because I didn't want to pay the exorbitant fee.	1/16/2018 10:51 PM
52	Not tangibly, but i feel that we get a higher level of respect from employers and clients/patients when they know that we are state licensed and have attended accredited schools. I think in the long run this will benefit our profession as a whole.	1/16/2018 10:46 PM
53	Expensive. Appears that most the costs go to the Bosrd who are not educated in that job and perform no function I can see. Having been on boards myself, I know how this can go. The board benefit but not the general membership. I lost many patients. Specifically, In order to become a preferred provider to Aetna, I had to fill out the contract. A stipulation of the contract is that I then had to bill under my own lisence, not the referring physician. Catch 22 with Aetna is ' Oh by the way, we don't recognize LMTs as approved providers, unless you live in Florida or Washington which has an every provider law. In those states, if state lisence, recognized and cannot be excluded. All retired teachers and many other retired state workers were suddenly not covered for my services. Other specific plans that would cover the diagnosis codes I use : 97140, 97110 and 95854 will cover me if billed under physicians lisence but not billed under my own. Want to keep licensure, okay. But I sure don't want to pay for the board to travel meet eat and accomplish nothing. When I spoke with a Board member, after speaking with a very helpful Commissioner of Insurance for the State of Washington, and explained the above scenario and asked for her help, she answered that making sure people got covered by insurance wasn't their job' I was kind of aghast. Okay, then what is the impetus for this whole thing. Protect the public? Unnecassary. Stop escort services? Never going to happen. Thanks Lael, Grant Gibbs	1/16/2018 10:42 PM
54	It took extra time to get licensed and employed at a massage therapist rate, but now that I am licensed, I hope any future opportunities will be available more easily	1/16/2018 10:26 PM
55	I would not say benefited. :)	1/16/2018 10:18 PM

Q3 Which of these positions best describes your opinion regarding continued state massage licensing:

Answered: 123 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I want the current licensing to stay as is	23.58%	29
I want state licensing to continue but prefer to eliminate the board (possibly reducing licensing fees)	43.90%	54
I want to eliminate state massage licensing all together	13.82%	17
I don't know	18.70%	23
TOTAL		123

#	OTHER/COMMENT (OPTIONAL)	DATE
1	I think having to pay for a FBI full background check every time we renew is ridiculous. A state background check of \$20 would suffice. And I believe I should not be told I have to have a CPR certification to practice. That should be the responsibility of the medical practitioner you work for, if you work for one. I'm not against CPR to save someone's life but that should be my choice not law, that puts too much liability in my lap. Besides if that's a requirement we're you choose to work then the place of business should ensure you meet their requirements for insurance billing. I don't do billing, my clients prefer to pay out of pocket, so since I'm not in that system why should I be forced to pay for it	1/24/2018 11:41 AM
2	This decision is best made by those who choose massage therapy as their primary income source.	1/20/2018 11:05 AM
3	I feel that AK needs a licensing system to have credibility with national standards and comply with insurance and federal regulations. But I don't feel that the board does anything to preserve standards or enhance the profession.	1/20/2018 12:54 AM
4	I think a board would be good, but that we need people who actually know what they are doing and can defend or even help out the little guy.	1/19/2018 9:21 PM
5	The blood pathogen hours shouldn't be included in the requirements, we are not nurses/ doctors. Fingerprinting every renewal is not necessary. I feel the fees should be at least half of what they are.	1/19/2018 9:06 PM

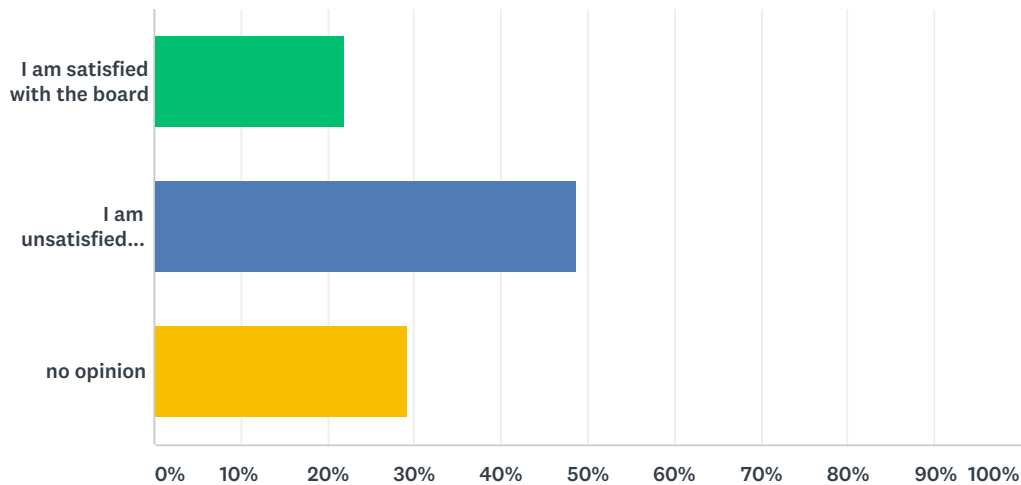
6	I think the licensing is good overall. However, the cost of licensing is very high for people who work in massage very part time. I am not one of those - it is my full time occupation, but for some folks the license fee would be a month's income or more.	1/19/2018 1:24 AM
7	I think the prices are ridiculous, I do believe LMT's should regulated and audited to ensure safe practices	1/19/2018 12:48 AM
8	I'm very disappointed in what got passed. I feel like we were lied to and are being treated like prostitutes instead of health professionals. The board system is unnecessary. I was always for licensing but would rather have no licensing if we don't have a choice besides what we have now.	1/18/2018 11:31 PM
9	It does set a professional standard and it might be helpful in terms of insurance.	1/18/2018 11:01 PM
10	I feel the costs are too high, not sure exactly what the board's purpose is or if it benefits me.	1/18/2018 9:32 PM
11	The fees need to be reevaluated as well as the requirement for fingerprinting every renewal period. Numerous other states do not require repeat fingerprinting.	1/18/2018 6:56 PM
12	I want to be able to bill the insurance for my clients that is the main reason I would vote to keep the licensing in place. I do agree that the fee is too high. It should be about \$100 - \$250 and no finger prints every year because it is the same fingers prints. Why do we need to update the finger prints every renewal?	1/18/2018 6:28 PM
13	Could you possibly make this less biased? How leading are these questions?	1/18/2018 5:29 PM
14	Licensing should either be reduced or there should be more programs to help therapists with start up and training.	1/18/2018 4:32 PM
15	Understanding that the state can do the licensing program, but they cannot understand our needs nor emphathize with our frustrations and make needed changes to our industry when needed.	1/18/2018 4:24 PM
16	I find that state licensing is beneficial in providing a state wide standard for professionalism and qualifications, but find the fees and and extent of the paperwork excessive.	1/18/2018 3:12 PM
17	If in fact a board is needed to bill insurance, then keep the board but if they're not required in this manner, please dissolve the board. I appreciate the State licensing and educational requirements. I feel the Mblex or Ncbtmb should be standards for obtaining state license.	1/18/2018 1:48 PM
18	It seems to me if you have a licensing board, they would know enough to license people appropriately, and thus I don't know the function of the board. We do have an Alaska Massage Therapy Association that could be consulted. Reducing fees appeals to me. Our fees are double what oregon pays Also we have fingerprinting requirements each time. Washington State got rid of their fingerprinting requirements in 1992. It's degrading.	1/18/2018 9:27 AM
19	I would like to see the board definitely eliminated if licensing continues.	1/18/2018 8:50 AM
20	The cost of the licensing fee is much, much too high- compare AK rates with other states, it is far higher than any cost of living differences; the high rate may be a deterrent for persons thinking about staying or leaving the profession or for some persons to attempt to circumvent the law by calling themselves by a different title than LMT.	1/18/2018 7:07 AM
21	The city clerk seemed to be much more efficient, and I think we do need to be licensed with someone overseeing that. The fees are outrageously high and the current board as it is has slowed things down and created a chaotic paperwork mess. If things were cleaned up, more efficient, and fees went down I would prefer to continue with State licensing.	1/17/2018 9:58 PM
22	Hasn't reduced prostitution, I know one of the board members on a personal level, and I know he shouldn't be in that position based off of his own personal bias...i don't like constant changing rules that's making it harder for HONEST people to practice...so ya i think they should lose the licensing or the board...but I doubt it's going to happen.	1/17/2018 2:00 PM
23	I have been practicing massage since 2004 and the increase in fees and the board have not effected me in any way other than it being a financial burden and increased stress	1/17/2018 9:46 AM
24	I honestly do not know I do want us to keep being able to bill health insurance as many of my fellow therapist do	1/17/2018 8:55 AM

25	If clients want to protect themselves they can look on profesional websites such as NCBTMB, AMTA and ABMP to find out if someone is listed. Also massage therapists can list their quailifications on thier business cards, advertising. I have been licensed in two other states over the years and in each of those states there are still business's that misrepresent themselves as legal massage business's but they are not. Licensing does not seem to prevent that. It seems to put financial burdens on those of us who are legitimate massage therapists	1/17/2018 8:46 AM
26	Needs to be cheaper and the process streamlined. Don't know if having a board is necessary or not	1/17/2018 8:42 AM
27	The board has not really served our community	1/17/2018 8:38 AM
28	We don't need a board that takes more then most of our pay checks	1/17/2018 7:57 AM
29	I want state licensing, not sure about the board only because of all the apparent confusion for so many other therapists.	1/17/2018 7:45 AM
30	Fee are not in line with other professionals.(RN, advance practice fuels are considerably more skilled and schooling, yet LMT s are required to foot a much higher fee!	1/17/2018 7:43 AM
31	The fee is outrageous.	1/17/2018 6:41 AM
32	Licensing fees HAVE to go down.	1/17/2018 6:29 AM
33	This licensing came out of an Anchorage therapist 's greed for insurance money and the Anchorage police department's need to crack down on prostitution. But there's no going back at this point, so the best option in this set of questions is to reduce fees (though I'm not aware of any state that has a license without a board)	1/17/2018 2:19 AM
34	Or follow state licensing like WA or OR already has in place.	1/17/2018 12:57 AM
35	The municipal rules to show 500 hours of Schooling and get the soft background check and along with state business licensing were working great.	1/17/2018 12:42 AM
36	I feel the cost of licensing is too high and having to get finger printed every renew is not needed. background checks yes, fingerprints no	1/17/2018 12:22 AM
37	I see the value. A licensed therapist at least has the option to bill insurance. But if you don't bill insurance it's an expensive piece of paper on your wall. I don't see how it has helped outside of insurance. If you choose to bill insurance you are spending a lot of time and energy to do so.	1/16/2018 11:59 PM
38	If the license has to go in order to get rid of the board I prefer to eliminate licensing altogether.	1/16/2018 11:57 PM
39	The board has been cynical to many therapists in the state and have abused their positions as power roles to focus on matters they deem worthy, they have too much control over the situation and seem to have unbalanced practices	1/16/2018 11:47 PM
40	The ONLY way I would want the licensing to stay is if the fees are reduced.	1/16/2018 11:29 PM
41	I don't feel licensing has done anything to crack down on sex trafficking and with clear requirements, the paperwork process could be handled by any of the state licensing employes and the additional cost of the board could be eliminated.	1/16/2018 11:25 PM
42	i was an LMT in AK in 2013-14 but have since returned to my practice in WA, so i'm no longer aware of the AK law nuances.	1/16/2018 11:08 PM

43	I would like to eliminate the waiver, it's an invasion of our rights and down right insulting. The licensing information should have been sent out to all massage therapists in alaska by the state, and or city formally by mail and email. *Not passed on thru word of mouth, or insurance carriers, schools implementing To new therapists, or testing organizations people are affiliated with. Licensing that is this involved financially, privacy and personal rights being encroached upon, time spent gathering information (for poor souls that missed the elusive grand father date), and time spent away from work and families for those that were already in business. This has been a disappointing experience in my personal life and business trying to get it done while not working to follow guided lines that were never spelled out until there after. It has put a small cloud over something I hold dear, helping and connecting with others. If I was on the board I would be saddened with the direction it has taken. A board compromised of fellow therapists should want to see healthy therapists and businesses survive and flourish, a board should be helpful and flexible with change. From my experience hurtling thru this forced license... board members put a stop sign to my life, financially, emotionally, physically, spiritually. Instead of how can we help, it was stop, drop what your doing, and take your hands of the wheel of your own payed for and registered car steering wheel. And you are now not incontrol and you have no transportation privilege. And say's who I ask....	1/16/2018 11:03 PM
44	The fee for this was literally 5X that what other professionals pay in this state, my wife, and OT payed \$125 a year!!!!	1/16/2018 10:51 PM
45	There are certainly changes that can be made. As with any new system there must be growth and change. However, i want us to have state licensing and have a board to review applicants and deal with issues relating to our massage community.	1/16/2018 10:46 PM
46	I want state licensing to continue but with some modifications. Eliminate # massages per year. Eliminate fingerprinting after initial application. Keep at 500 hour graduate from massage school.	1/16/2018 10:45 PM
47	Plan A would be eliminate entirely but doubt that's possible now.	1/16/2018 10:42 PM
48	I'm not sure what the board does.	1/16/2018 10:26 PM
49	I don't think much has been done in the way of eliminating the non professional Massage industry. However, if it actually helps MTs charge insurance then perhaps licensure should stay in effect.	1/16/2018 10:18 PM

Q4 Which of this position best describes your opinion of the current state massage board:

Answered: 123 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I am satisfied with the board	21.95%	27
I am unsatisfied with the board	48.78%	60
no opinion	29.27%	36
TOTAL		123

#	COMMENT:	DATE
1	I feel completely detached from them. The anomaly that tells me what and how I'm going to have to practice.	1/24/2018 11:41 AM
2	I find it worrisome that are fees are so high, highest in nation	1/20/2018 12:08 AM
3	I feel like the board takes too long to grant the initial license. I know people who have waited months and months and one person is at a year now. It seems like they loose files a lot and and not very transparent about where they are in the processes. Just stringing people along with - "oh, you should get it soon." I know they are busy, but it seems a bit ridiculous the hoops you have to jump through. I have my license and am grateful, but I see new grads graduate and go through the same drawn out process - unable to work. The process of receiving my license has made me distrust the board. I have ideas about this.	1/19/2018 1:24 AM
4	I like Dawn I feel like she listened to me	1/19/2018 12:48 AM
5	I'm not sure that they are good or bad but bound by what was passed into law. I just don't like the system.	1/18/2018 11:31 PM
6	I need the board to be more reasonable of fee, and what the licensing can benefit the massage therapist more than the state.	1/18/2018 6:28 PM
7	I am unhappy they raised the minimum hours a therapist must receive to practice. The fee for licensing is too high especially when most therapist I know have more than one job. I know therapists who have given up their practice because it does not work financially when they only work part time.	1/18/2018 4:46 PM
8	There are licensing requirements that I feel are unrelated to the massage therapy profession, thus am unsatisfied with the board that created these requirements.	1/18/2018 3:12 PM

9	I have had to resubmit paperwork too many times, and I know too many massage therapists that have not been able to work for weeks to months while waiting for their license application to be processed. I also think the MBLEX is a complete waste of time, effort, and money and would like to see our own State test created or hold the schools responsible for administering a qualified exam.	1/17/2018 9:58 PM
10	The rate of fees are astronomical and I have no clue what they do.	1/17/2018 2:15 PM
11	Too much ego and conflict of interest and not enough proactive empathy with results.	1/17/2018 2:00 PM
12	I do not feel this board provides any benefits.	1/17/2018 12:41 PM
13	It seems that the board is only causing frustration and stress in the massage community from what I see in posted on fb. I think there are good and bad therapist without a board and with. I still hear of people being hurt by licensed massage therapists and unethical therapists. So what good is the whole process of licensing and having a board in the end?	1/17/2018 9:46 AM
14	If now and in the future, licensing requirements will be changed and modified due to the interpretation of board members it will add undo stress emotionally as well as, again financially to keep ones license. I would like to see state licensing go away. Insurance companies and clients should be satisfied by therapists proving their status via NCBTMB and AMTA ABMP certification.	1/17/2018 8:46 AM
15	Again part of the high license fees are to pay the board members	1/17/2018 8:38 AM
16	I am neither of the two extremes. But I definitely haven't seen enough out of them to make me want to keep them.	1/17/2018 6:29 AM
17	They have done nothing but made things more expensive and make the entire process more difficult	1/17/2018 1:34 AM
18	I went to massage school in WA but chose to not practice after 2001 in AK.	1/17/2018 12:57 AM
19	I haven't seen a positive or negative impact again I don't know how things were before licensing went into effect and a board was appointed.	1/17/2018 12:53 AM
20	Not sure it's warranted	1/17/2018 12:44 AM
21	I don't believe the board knows what they are doing. I called jill to ask if the massage license replaced my state business license and she said yes. I no longer needed the state business license. That was when it first started. I didn't find out until last month that I did need to keep up my business license if I had worked for myself. Good thing I've been employed this whole time. I let it lapse. .	1/17/2018 12:42 AM
22	no understand fully what the board is doing besides getting paid. a massage place just open next to my home. I do not think they are doing just massage	1/17/2018 12:22 AM
23	Do not get me wrong on this, I'm sure the board has been very busy. I, however, don't see what they have done, other than review applications just in time for renewal and they can review again. I believe the goal was to weed out the less ethical practices. I'm not sure that was accomplished.	1/16/2018 11:59 PM
24	The board has become abusive. It is actively seeking to change the current regulations in order to deny licenses to graduates of a qualified school that board members have a grudge against.	1/16/2018 11:57 PM
25	Due to extra complication and money now.	1/16/2018 11:48 PM
26	Again, every time myself or other therapists have reached out to board members directly, the members automatically jump to what they are doing and power their beliefs in the conversation rather than listening to the concerns of the herpaifs in the community	1/16/2018 11:47 PM
27	The board moves too slowly in license approval. Communication with the LMT community as well as individual LMS is very poor.	1/16/2018 11:34 PM
28	I appreciate the board, but I feel like they need to do some research before they come up with their new rules & regulations.	1/16/2018 11:20 PM
29	see #3	1/16/2018 11:08 PM
30	This is unneeded in this state, if something isn't broke don't fix it. All this was, in my eyes, was some one putting a feather in their cap of experience.	1/16/2018 10:51 PM
31	See above comment.	1/16/2018 10:42 PM
32	They are always changing and seem to be looking out for therapist as they are therapists themselves.	1/16/2018 10:36 PM

33	I wish I knew more of what their purpose was	1/16/2018 10:26 PM
34	Don't like the high costs and fingerprinting every 2 years	1/16/2018 10:25 PM
35	The board is abusing its authority by refusing to recognize graduates of a program that meets all requirements in statute and regulation.	1/16/2018 9:38 PM

From: [Edric Carrillo](#)
To: [Caitlyn Ellis](#)
Subject: FW: "No," on HB 275
Date: Friday, January 26, 2018 8:25:35 AM

From: meltingrockmassage [mailto:meltingrockmassage@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2018 11:27 PM

To: Rep. Sam Kito <Rep.Sam.Kito@akleg.gov>

Subject: "No," on HB 275

Representative Kito,

I am writting to ask you to consider not supporting the continuation of Massage licensing. We do not have a population of Massage Therapists in a great enough number to support having a licensing board at a reasonable cost to small businesses. The licensing board has not done anything to make the public feel more safe.

I have been licensed through the State of Hawaii since 2002 and practicing in AK since 2003. I have participated in Licensing with Alaska since it was implemented.

The licensing has not helped the public feel any safer, when discussing licensing with the public they have no idea licensing even took effect, what they have noticed is a steady climb in prices for Massage therapy.

Any of the people opperating as massage therapists that were a problem are still a problem because now they have been grandfathered in as Licensed Massage Therapists and so the public has no idea that they do not have legitimate training. I understand that the back ground checks have been valuable in the battle against human trafficking; however, it does not seem reasonable for Massage Therapists to have to shoulder the burden of this battle.

The cost of licensing is a major concern, when the AMTA was having meetings pre-licensing to see if massage therapists were in favor of licensing, repeatedly, the response was, "Yes, contingent on there being enough therapists to make the licensing a reasonable cost." We were told at that time they would certainly do the research and make sure there were enough participants to make licensing be about \$150 bi-annually. Since licensing took effect I know of therapists who have chosen not to be licensed and no longer work in the industry due to the greater expense. Some retiring early, some who had just graduated from massage school with debt and did not have an established clients. Part-time/new to the industry therapists being the most affected.

If it would reduce the cost I would urge you to at least cut the board and allow us to be regulated as the acupuncturists are regulated with licensing. As a licensed massage professional in AK since 2003, I do not feel represented by the board.

The massage licensing board has not provided any safety for the public as it has grandfathered/licensed illigitamate practitioners. For individuals to be investigated the cost for licensing will increase resulting in illigitimate people still practicing. The board has not been mindful of therapists that live in remote places. The board is costing us too much money with their narrow minded decisions. The board has shown that it would be better suited for cities to manage licensing requirements insted of the state, until our population warrants state licensing.

Massage licensing has not been entirely bennifital to Massage Therapists as it has driven out part time and thoes new to the industry.

The creation of Massage Licensing in Alaska was presented to the state with manipulated statistics and again I would ask that you would please consider voting NO on HB275.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Lisa Hunt, LMT

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S7 active, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

From: [Edric Carrillo](#)
To: [Caitlyn Ellis](#)
Subject: FW: HB 275
Date: Friday, January 26, 2018 8:25:16 AM

-----Original Message-----

From: Kara Hawley [<mailto:karahawley@ymail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2018 8:30 PM
To: Rep. Sam Kito <Rep.Sam.Kito@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB 275

Dear Representative Kito,

Please vote no on HB 275 and allow the Board of Massage Therapists to sunset. I have been a massage therapist in Alaska for 11 years. While licensing for massage therapists in Alaska is good, the board is not beneficial to me. In fact having a board costs me a lot of money and creates problems in delays of processing. This has been burdensome for me financially and unnecessary since I keep my standards up to the National Certification Standards, which requires more from me. I was told if this was too expensive then it would not be pursued...I have paid over \$1000 in 2 years and that has taken my family time to recover. There are too few therapists in Alaska to make this financially acceptable. Many of my friends who worked part time have had to hang up their profession because the costs were too much to justify them continuing in their practice. This has not benefited Alaskans but harmed them.

Please vote No!

Sincerely,
Kara Hawley, LMP

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Rep. Sam Kito](#)
To: [House Labor and Commerce](#)
Subject: FW: HB 275
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2018 5:19:20 PM

From: Amy Angaiak [mailto:amy.mountain.spirit@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2018 5:02 PM

To: Rep. Sam Kito <Rep.Sam.Kito@akleg.gov>; Rep. Adam Wool <Rep.Adam.Wool@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Louise Stutes <Rep.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov>; Rep. Chris Birch <Rep.Chris.Birch@akleg.gov>; Rep. Gary Knopp <Rep.Gary.Knopp@akleg.gov>; Rep. Colleen Sullivan-Leonard <Rep.Colleen.Sullivan-Leonard@akleg.gov>; Rep. Mike Chenault <Rep.Mike.Chenault@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bryce Edgmon <Rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov>

Subject: HB 275

Dear members of the Labor & Commerce Committee,

I am writing to ask you to vote no on HB 275.

I am a Licensed Massage Therapist & have been practicing in Fairbanks, Alaska since 2000, with the exception of 2004-2008, when I was living in the lower 48. Before the State of Alaska took over regulation for Massage Therapists, the city of Fairbanks did a fine job with the licensing. It was a simple, quick process with a reasonable fee. When we were first notified the state was taking over, there has been nothing but frustration and stress for not only myself, but for every colleague that I have talked to.

I am in support of letting the State Board of Massage Therapists to sunset because, since its inception, the whole process we have gone through has been poorly communicated & unorganized. I was told by my workplace of the new regulations & we LMTs were only notified a short time before we were required to have our applications & exorbitant fees in. (We felt it was an unfair fee since it was way higher than nurses, who deal with bodily fluids, injections and such. The fee has thankfully come down some since then.) We all scrambled to get everything together and this was difficult because fingerprinting services & CPR classes are not offered on a regular basis here. For many of us the \$600+ fee was an inconvenience, due to the short notice. I made the deadline but did not receive my approval until FIVE months later, some colleagues had to wait longer than that even. There was very little communication from the board during that time. I hear from new therapists applying for licensing, that it is still taking an unreasonable length of time as well.

I am completely in support of the State of Alaska regulating the licensing for Massage Therapists, I just feel a board is not necessary since our license applications & renewals can be approved or denied by an administrator, especially now that a majority of the people currently practicing in the state have already gone through the application process. Without a board, our fees won't be as high, there won't be major delays, and there won't be added stress to our lives.

Thank you for your consideration & for all that you do.

Sincerely,

Amy Angaiak, LMT