

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,

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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

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Workplace Massage