

Hello Denise - I'm forwarding the email I sent to OPR in 2015, (see below) the last time this issue came to the State House. My concerns are the same. I might add that in my opinion, "...licensure as it's been proposed to date, will drive up the cost of doing business, thereby making it more difficult for some Massage Therapists to continue practicing and if the cost of doing business goes up, so will the cost to the consumer, thereby making massage care unaffordable to the people who need it the most..."

I'm planning on attending tomorrow morning, but with the weather, I'm uncertain I'll get there. Thank you for taking the time to read below I hope to meet you tomorrow, Lj Stewart, LMT Owner, Barnet TradePost Wellness Center

2015:

From: [samuraihini@hotmail.com](mailto:samuraihini@hotmail.com)<[samuraihini@hotmail.com](mailto:samuraihini@hotmail.com)> on behalf of  
Laura Jean Stewart <[lj@barnettradepost.com](mailto:lj@barnettradepost.com)>  
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2015 9:59:42 AM  
To: [sos.opr.massagetherapists@sec.state.vt.us](mailto:sos.opr.massagetherapists@sec.state.vt.us)  
Subject: Proposed Massage Licensure

Greetings [Mr. Gilman](#) and OPR, thank you for the good work you're all doing in general, but with specific regard to the proposed Vermont State regulation of the Massage Therapy profession as written by the VT-AMTA in the current Sunrise Application submitted this July 2015. As an Elected Officer of the VT-AMTA, I've been struggling with this issue for years. I am bound by my Oath of Office to uphold the mission and strategic plan of the association, but as a Taxpayer, an individual Massage Therapist (practicing full time for over thirty years) and the owner of an interdisciplinary wellness center, I must share my concerns.

I feel we will be doing the Public more harm than good by licensing Massage Therapists. Currently, with the "...buyer beware..." situation, the Public knows they must fully vet out the credentials and experience of any Body Worker from whom they seek care. A License doesn't make for a good Therapist, knowledge and education does...

With the word "Licensed" comes an implied connotation of knowledge and I believe it will give the Public a false sense of security that any Massage Therapist who is "Licensed" must have greater knowledge than the proposed licensure (requiring only 500 hours, without any Continuing Education requirements) truly represents.

Those of we Massage Therapists who want credentials, have sought out and acquired credentials, without State Licensure.

And lest we forget, we Vermont Massage Therapists are also taxpayers and deserve some protections, too!

The proposed minimum standard does not equate with the thousands of hours of both undergraduate and continuing ed that myself and many of my Vermont professional colleagues have taken, yet licensing will level the playing [field. I](#) feel if the state decides to regulate the profession of Massage Therapy, "Rostering" will better serve the Public. A tiered system, in conjunction with access to lists of specific credentials and experience, will offer the taxpayers much greater protection than a license.

As proposed, licensing will only be forced upon those using the term "massage" in their title, which will undoubtedly result in many BodyWorkers simply using the title of whichever technique(s) they employ, ie: "Reflexologist", "Reiki Master", "Kinesiologist", "Cranial Sacral Therapist", etc. instead of calling themselves a "Massage Therapist", thus there's no guaranteed protection for we professionals or the public with the proposed licensing.

The proposed regulation will not give Massage Therapists portability with our neighboring states, because New Hampshire is 750 hours with ConEd requirements, New York is 1,000 with ConEd and Massachusetts is 650 hours and is currently working on increasing their minimum hours with the addition of ConEd.

If there is to be any State Regulation of Massage Therapy, I feel strongly a tiered roster system will best serve the need.

If there is to be any State Regulation of Massage Therapy, I feel strongly we as professionals must be included in the process.

There simply has to be some happy medium we can strike whereby the Profession and the Public are all protected.

I intentionally have waited to share my viewpoint and haven't attended the Public Hearings, due to the possible conflict of interest given my elected position, but I would be remiss in my duty as a Vermonter to not let my opinions be known.

Thank you again for the time and effort you've been putting into this issue.  
Sincerely, Laurajean "L J" Stewart

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*Sent from my Verizon 4G LTE Droid*