

Testimony in Support of Licensure of Massage Therapists  
House Government Operations Committee  
Laura Morley, Massage Therapist  
January 28, 2026

My name is Laura Morley and I have been a Massage Therapist since 2000. I was educated and licensed in the State of Florida. I held my license in Florida for 8 years before returning to live in the Northeast. I currently have a practice in North Bennington and teach a Massage Therapy program in Bennington.

I support **licensure** of both massage therapists and massage therapy establishments.

Since there are no standards of education in Vermont, I have modeled my Massage Therapy program after the national minimum of educational hours (500) so that my students can sit for the MBLEx even though that is not required in Vermont. My students are deeply immersed in Anatomy, Physiology, and Pathology, as it is imperative that a Massage Therapist know the important structures in the body to avoid endangering their clients. We often encounter pathologies that would need adjustments to the therapy we are providing or, at times, massage must be avoided entirely. Bottom line - we need standards of education.

It is irresponsible that Vermont is one of the only states left to not require licensing for Massage Therapists. Massage therapists are part of the continuum of health care in Vermont. In Florida, we were regulated by the Department of Health (since 1990). I was always proud that my license looked just like my mother's - she was a critical care nurse.

If it's OPR's primary mission to protect the public, why wouldn't they want the strongest tool in their enforcement toolbox to protect the public, which is the licensing of massage therapists and establishments? Only licensure ensures that Massage Therapists are properly trained **and** doing all they can to prevent sex traffickers from operating in the name of Massage Therapists/Massage Therapy establishments. This can **only** happen with **licensure**. The current registration does none of these things: education is not required or verified, there is no scope of practice, and there are no continuing education requirements. We pay an exorbitant fee yet see no representation. Now, with the addition of the establishment license, small businesses like mine will face a **financial barrier** of paying for 2 licenses. TO be clear, I'm not against an establishment license. We had them in Florida, **along with licensure**. In Vermont this like double taxation without representation.

Respectfully,  
Laura Morley