



ADVOCATE FOR MASSAGE THERAPY AS A RECOGNIZED AND RESPECTED HEALTHCARE PROFESSION

January 13, 2018

To: WSMTA Board of Directors and Members

From: WSMTA President, Marybeth Berney, LMT (mberney@mywsmta.org)

Re: January 12, 2018 Board of Massage (BOM) Meeting Notes

1. If you want to contact the Board, (as a whole, or an individual Board member) you MUST go through the Dept. of Health Board of Massage staff. This allows for tracking and greater transparency.
2. Still working on a Newsletter that will be designed to answer questions that both LMTs and the Public have about massage regulation in WA.
3. Guest speaker Farshad Talebi, AAG. Mr. Talebi gave an overview of WA's Task Force Against Trafficking of Persons. This Task Force was created by RCW 7.68.350.
 - a. Mostly policy work, coordination with law enforcement, prosecutors and victims.
 - b. 300 Illegitimate Massage Businesses (IMBs) in WA each have 3-4 women working there.
 - c. \$5 million spent in a week on commercial sex in greater Seattle metro area!!
 - d. Organized crime from Southern CA and NY, they use a franchise model of business. Sex and labor trafficking.
 - e. Best place for legal penalties is... landlords and property owners who rent to IMBs. They are the people in the community that have the most to lose.
4. HB2291 -- Mr. Talebi feels this legislation would not help law enforcement with IMBs, as it penalizes the victim/worker and not the owner. DOH staff said the estimate to set-up a system for photos on massage licenses would be \$600,000. This cost would likely be passed on to LMTs as the Massage Board must be self-supporting.
5. Considerable time was spent discussing minimum educational standards for licensure. At the Nov. 17, 2017 meeting they had voted to increase the hours, all of the public comment at that meeting was in favor of this. At this meeting, 1/12/2018 the process the board used was to go section by section and add hours where the board thought it was necessary to have additional educational hours. At the end of that they added the hours up and were at 655hrs. This seemed to freak out the board members. So staff did a little refiguring and removed a few hrs. here and there and brought the number down to 625." *I have to ask the question...how will any of this be legally defensible when clearly the board was pulling numbers out of the air and randomly assigning them to content areas. Why not use the Entry Level Analysis Project (ELAP), this curriculum breakdown was well research and pulled data from educational experts across the country*". The good news is that there is still time for all of us to comment and the finish line on this set of WACs is months away!
6. The next BOM meeting is March 9th in Kent. Rules development for that meeting will be WACs for continuing education and tools.