

January 31, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

The Alaska Board of Massage strongly supports the request of the Governor's bill HB225. This bill is an opportunity to diminish the impact of human and sex trafficking on Alaska's licensed massage therapists and their clients. This initiative in legislation establishes a mechanism that more effectively addresses the need for protections for victims of human and sex trafficking as it increases penalties for all forms of trafficking.

The Board of Massage Therapists has identified key points for consideration:

Relating to the Positive Impact of HB225 of Human and Sex Trafficking

- This bill diminishes the control of traffickers and increases victim protections.
- This bill imposes harsh penalties on patrons who establish a demand for human and sex trafficking.
- This bill diminishes the impact of exploitation of the profession of massage therapy as it is used as a front to attract patrons of human and sex trafficking.

Relating to the Impact of Human and Sex Trafficking in the Massage Therapy Profession

- The Board of Massage Therapists has taken necessary action to develop massage establishment regulations that would serve as an additional tool to address illicit establishments and protect legitimate business.
- The necessity of protecting the public from illicit activity increases the business costs for legitimate massage therapists and legitimate massage establishments.
- Trafficking endangers legitimate professional licensed massage therapists as patrons of illicit massage activity have been to know attempt solicitation.
- Human and sex trafficking impacts the administrative costs of professional licensing through the high prevalence of fraudulent attempts to obtain professional licenses.

In closing, the Board of Massage Therapists would like to offer our support in the pursuit of passage of HB225.

Best Regards,



David Edwards-Smith

Chair, Alaska Board of Massage Therapists