

# SB157/HB216

February 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

The Alaska Board of Massage strongly opposes the request of the Governor's SB157. This initiative in legislation establishes a mechanism for establishing temporary professional licensure to applicants. With the uniqueness of the massage profession, the board understands that temporary licensure compromises public safety.

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

- The profession of massage therapy is unique in the shared vulnerability of the therapist and clients. This requires appropriate education in professional boundaries as well as a complete state and federal background check.
- The profession of massage therapy is highly targeted and exploited by illicit activity such as human and sex trafficking veiled as massage therapy.
- The board has identified the necessity of full state and federal background checks prior to licensure.
  1. There is a trend of the approximate 70% of applicants presenting criminal convictions in background checks (Specific data can be obtained upon request).
- The board requires verification that the statutory education requirements are met prior to licensure.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Edwards-Smith', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Edwards-Smith

Chair

Alaska Board of Massage Therapists