

GEORGIA STATE BOARD OF MASSAGE THERAPY

**Board Meeting Minutes
Professional Licensing Boards
237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, GA
June 12, 2015 - 9:00A.M**

The Georgia Board of Massage Therapy met on Friday, June 12, 2015. The following members were present:

Board Members Present

Craig Knowles, Chair
Jennifer Clay, Vice Chair
Jane Johnson, Board Member

Administrative Staff Present

Adrienne Price, Executive Director
Tamara Elliott, Board Support Specialist
Kathy Osier, Licensing Supervisor

Attorney General's Office

Scott Forbes, Assistant Attorney General

Visitors Present

Lea Chilkuri, Columbus Technical College
Loretta Hoover, Columbus Technical College

Call to Order Mr. Knowles established that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 9:09a.m.

OPEN SESSION

09:30 A.M Rule Hearing – BR 345-6-.02

**SYNOPSIS OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE GEORGIA BOARD OF MASSAGE THERAPY
CHAPTER 345-6, PROFESSIONAL AND UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT, RULE 345-6-.02, SCOPE OF
PRACTICE OF MASSAGE THERAPY STUDENTS**

Purpose: The purpose is to formulate a rule that provides guidelines for massage therapy students.

Main Features: The rule states the enrollment requirement, defines the title and compensation requirements, and sets out training standards applicable to education programs and their instructors.

**DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE EXISTING RULE AND THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE
GEORGIA BOARD OF MASSAGE THERAPY CHAPTER
345-6, PROFESSIONAL AND UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT, RULE 345-6-.02, SCOPE OF
PRACTICE OF MASSAGE THERAPY STUDENTS**

[Note: underlined text is proposed to be added; lined-through text is proposed to be deleted.]

345-6-.02 Scope of Practice of Massage Therapy Students

1) A person pursuing a course of study leading to a degree or certificate as a massage therapist in an educational program recognized by the board may engage in the practice, services, or activities of massage or massage therapy when such person is:

A) Actively enrolled in a massage therapy program or school recognized by the Board;

B) Designated by title indicating student status and shall not represent themselves as a massage therapist or massage practitioner;

C) Fulfilling uncompensated work experiences required for the attainment of the degree or certificate. For the purpose se of this rule “uncompensated” means a person in student status m a y not intentionally or knowingly agree to accept any compensation, directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly, in cash or in kind, in the form of payments, gifts, tips, remuneration, recompense, or rewards to or from any person or entity for services rendered while in student status;

2) The primary responsibility for the services provided for clients by the designated student rests with the licensed massage therapist supervisor or other authorized instructor.

3) Documentation of all services for clients and treatment plans must be reviewed and approved by the licensed massage therapist supervisor.

Authority of O.G.G.A. §§ 43-1-25, 43-24A-19(2), 43-24A-3(4)

Written Comments Received

Michael West and Fellow Students, International School of Skin Nail Care & Massage Therapy
Kathryn Ballard

Public Comments Received

No Public comments were received or offered during the hearing.

Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to adopt the 345-6-.02 proposed amendment as posted.

Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion that the formulation and adoption of this rule does not impose excessive regulatory cost on any licensee and any cost to comply with the proposed rule cannot be reduced by a less expensive alternative.

Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion that it is not legal or feasible to meet the objectives of O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-25, 43-24A-19(2), and 43-24A-3(4) to adopt or implement differing actions for businesses as listed in O.C.G.A. § 50-13-4(3)(A), (B), (C), and (D). The formulation and adoption of these rules will impact every licensee in the same manner and each licensee is independently licensed in the field of massage therapy.

The hearing adjourned at 9:56a.m.

11:00 A.M. Presentation – National Certification Board of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCBTMB)

Donna Sarvello, Vice President of Educational Support presented a PowerPoint presentation to the Board and public guests about NCBTMB's mission, goals, governance, standards, certifications, and partnerships with national and international organizations with similar missions. She also conducted an overview of internal processes to include how schools and continuing education providers are granted provider numbers, how the programs and providers are audited and the various disciplinary actions that may be taken by the Board should a provider not meet the standards of the organization. Ms. Sarvello shared that one of the most important services that NCBTMB offers to the states is their ability to identify irregular or unlawful trends within some massage therapy educational programs and organizations across state lines and then further assisting state boards with investigating those illegitimate programs and closing them down if necessary. Ms. Sarvello highlighted some features of the NCBTMB website and reiterated to the Board that the organization exists to define and advance the highest standards in the massage therapy and bodywork profession through education, competency markers, research, policy making. She indicated that the Board identifies a need in their state, it is NCBTMB's job to see how they can help meet that need because if there is a need in that one state, it is likely that there may be that very same need in another.

The Board members expressed an interest in placing additional information regarding the approval process for continuing education in the state of Georgia on the NCBTMB website. Ms. Sarvello informed the Board that if we send it to her, she will be happy to ensure that the information is placed on their site as it relates to the state of Georgia. Mr. Knowles thanked Ms. Sarvello for taking the time to speak with them about NCBTMB and indicated that the board staff will be in contact with her regarding the information the Board would like to place on their site as it relates to approved NCBTMB CE providers.

Agenda

The Board accepts the agendas presented.

Open Session Minutes

1) April 24, 2015 Board Meeting

Ms. Clay motioned, Ms. Johnson seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to approve the April 24, 2015 open session minutes.

Licenses to Ratify: April 18, 2015 – June 5, 2015

Ms. Clay motioned, Ms. Johnson seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to approve the ratified list of licenses issued April 18, 2015 – June 5, 2015 as presented.

Correspondence from Rick Garbowski – Kinesiology Taping

Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to refer the correspondence regarding kinesiology taping to the Georgia State Board of Physical Therapy for an opinion regarding the use of this technique.

Discussion – FSMTB Call for Resolutions

Ms. Clay motioned, Ms. Johnson seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to notify FSMTB that the Board is interested in them proceeding with the development of the National Database for massage therapists and recommend that they consider adding a school verification process along with adding a limit to the number of times an applicant can take the exam and extending the timeframe the candidate will have to wait to retest as it is the Board's position that these measures will help to ensure that a school's pass rates are not unjustly effected and help to minimize incidences of fraud and cheating as it relates to the test questions.

Petition to Repeal – BR 345-8-.03(1)(e) and (6)(a) – Rosen, Eric (Rick)

Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to deny the petition to repeal Board Rule 345-8-.03(1)(e) and (6)(a) based on the position that the requirements within the rule serve to provide an additional layer of protection to the public by assisting the Board in ensuring that applicants are attending legitimate massage therapy educational programs and schools. Additionally the National Certification Board of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCBTMB) further assists the Board and other state massage therapy boards with ensuring the closure of massage therapy educational programs and schools that have engaged in illegal and unethical practices, such as human trafficking and the production of fraudulent transcripts.

Petition Waiver –BR 345-8-.03 – Day, Kristyn

Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to grant the petition for waiver of Board Rule 345-8-.03 based on the program being granted board approval status.

Petition Waiver –BR 345-8-.03 – Deshong, Jamie

Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to grant the petition for waiver of Board Rule 345-8-.03 based on the program being granted board approval status.

Petition Waiver –BR 345-8-.03 – Elliott, William

Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to grant the petition for waiver of Board Rule 345-8-.03 based on the program being granted board approval status.

Petition Waiver –BR 345-8-.03 – Farrow, Xazavioer

Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to grant the petition for waiver of Board Rule 345-8-.03 based on the program being granted board approval status.

Petition Waiver –BR 345-8-.03 – Kunze, Lindsay

Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to grant the petition for waiver of Board Rule 345-8-.03 based on the program being granted board approval status.

Petition Waiver –BR 345-8-.03 – Mullinax, Bradley

Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to grant the petition for waiver of Board Rule 345-8-.03 based on the program being granted board approval status.

Board Chair's Report – C. Knowles

1) School Recognition – Everest Institute – Jonesboro

Ms. Clay motioned, Ms. Johnson seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to continue program board recognition status until the August 2015 Board Meeting at which time the Board will review the program's current NPEC and NCBTMB status.

2) School Recognition – Everest Institute – Norcross

Ms. Clay motioned, Ms. Johnson seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to withdraw recognition status from Everest Institute Norcross Campus. The program has (10) business days from notification to inform current and potential students of the Board's decision in accordance with Board Rule 345-8-.03(2)(a) and 345-8-.03(3).

Executive Director's Report – A. Price

Executive Director's report presented the Board with statistical data relevant to the number of active licensees, the processing of applications, and complaints/compliance matters. Ms. Price updated the Board on the process for implementing the CE Broker continuing education tracking system, the current status of the proposed rule amendment in reference to continuing education hours, and suggested to that the Board consider drafting a policy addressing any requirements for NCBTMB Continuing Education Providers & Instructors so that providers and licensees will know the Board's expectations as it relates to the reporting of information within CE Broker. Ms. Price also updated the Board on the CE Provider Case MT150092. The Board accepts the report as presented and Mr. Knowles requested that Ms. Price work with him further to develop a policy for the Board to consider at the next meeting

Miscellaneous

1) **Discussion – Amy Bramuchi – Inquiry regarding Board Operations**

The Board accepts the correspondence in reference to Board Operations as information.

2) **Summary of Board Actions from 2007- June 2015**

Ms. Price informed Board members that in light of some of the questions that were raised in Ms. Bramuchi’s correspondence, she thought it would be a good exercise to provide the Board with some statistical data related to the number of actions taken by the Board since its inception. Ms. Price noted that although the Massage Therapy Practice Act was adopted in 2005, during the first two years of existence the Board was developing rules and policies by which to operate. As a result, the statistical analysis of Board actions begins in 2007. Ms. Price provided the Board with the following statistics regarding Board actions from 2007 to June 2015 and indicated that if any members of the public are interested, they may visit the Secretary of State website to view some of the Public Orders generated by the Board from 2005-2013 as 2014 & 2015 are not yet available via that feature:

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Annual Total
Voluntary Cease & Desist Orders	0	18	20	110	31	11	7	10	6	213
Cease & Desist Orders From Hearings	0	0	3	1	0	20	3	3	0	30
Consent Agreements For Licensure/ Renewal	2	14	25	8	13	20	7	1	6	96
Consent Agreement For Reinstatement Of Licensure	0	0	5	2	11	10	21	19	27	95
Consent Orders	0	0	0	0	4	8	1	2	1	16
Voluntary Surrenders	0	1	0	1	0	1	2	3	0	8
Summary Suspensions	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	5
Revocation	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Hearing On Denial of Licensure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Petition Waivers	0	0	0	35	13	20	13	4	14	99
Total	2	33	53	157	72	92	57	44	55	565

3) **New Board Member Appointments**

Ms. Johnson reported to the Board that she received a call from the Governor’s office and she was informed that she will no longer be serving on the Board after this meeting. Ms. Price reported that the newly appointed members will be announced near close of business on today and they are Ms. Trisha Butler and Ms. Pam Nichols who are both licensed massage therapists. Ms. Price also reported that the Consumer Member seat still remains vacant at this time. Mr. Knowles, Ms. Clay and staff expressed their gratitude for Ms. Johnson’s service to the Board.

Ms. Clay motioned, Ms. Johnson and seconded, and the Board voted to enter into Executive Session in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 43-1-2(k) (1) (2), O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2(1), O.C.G.A. § 43-1-2(k) (4), O.C.G.A. § 43-1-19(h) (2) & (4) to receive and review information pertaining to Applications. Voting in favor of the motion were those present who included Board members: Mr. Knowles, Ms. Clay, and Ms. Johnson.

At the conclusion of Executive Session on Friday, June 12, 2015 Mr. Knowles declared the meeting to be “open” pursuant to the Open and Public Meeting Act O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 et seq. No votes were taken during executive session.

OPEN SESSION

Applicant Interviews

12:00PM V.S.B. Request for Reconsideration

Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to amend previous motion to issue a Public Consent Agreement for Licensure with a \$500 fine for unlicensed practice to be paid in full by August 27, 2015. If the licensee fails to pay the fine in full by August 27, 2015, the license will be suspended.

Executive Minutes

1) April 24, 2015 Board Meeting

Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to approve the April 24, 2015 executive session minutes.

Attorney General’s Report- J. Scott Forbes

Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the memorandums as presented and ratify the following recommendations made in Executive Session.

- 1) B.J. Close Case.
- 2) B.O. Amend the motion to issue a Public Consent Order to include a \$500 fine for unlicensed practice.

Cognizant’s Report – J. Clay

Ms. Johnson motioned, Mr. Knowles seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept and ratify the following recommendations made in Executive Session.

- MT140079 Table a decision on this case until the August 28, 2015 meeting.
- MT140065 Refer the case to the Attorney General’s Office for a summary suspension and a hearing for revocation of licensure.
- MT140075 Close the case with no action.
- MT150006 Close the case with no action.
- MT150009 Refer the case to the Attorney General’s office to pursue the owner for aiding and abetting unlicensed practice based on inspections.
- MT150011 Refer the case to Attorney General’s office for a hearing for revocation of licensure.
- MT150033 Accept Cease and Desist Orders and close the case.
- MT150045 Accept the Consent Order and close the case.
- MT150055 Close the case with no action.
- MT150060 Refer the case to the Attorney General’s Office to proceed with a cease and desist hearing for unlicensed practice.
- MT150064 Refer the case to investigations to offer a voluntary cease and desist order. If the Respondent refuses to sign the cease and desist order, refer the case to the Attorney General’s Office to proceed with a cease and desist hearing with a fine of \$500.
- MT150067 Refer the case to the Attorney General’s Office for a summary suspension and a hearing for revocation of licensure.
- MT150088 Refer the case to Attorney General’s office for a cease and desist hearing for unlicensed practice and/or aiding and abetting unlicensed practice for each respondent involved.
- MT150095 Close case with no action
- MT150124 Refer the case to the Attorney General’s Office for a Public Consent Order to include three (3) months suspension, no home visits, quarterly employer reports if applicable, five (5) years of probation, and \$1000 fine.
- MT150135 Refer the case to Legal Services for a Public Consent Agreement for Reinstatement of Licensure with a \$500 fine for unlicensed practice.
- MT150144 Refer the case to the Attorney General’s office for Summary Suspension and a hearing for revocation of licensure.

Legal Memos to the Board

Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept and ratify the following recommendations made in Executive Session.

- 1) E.L.S. Request for Reconsideration Rescind the previous motion and issue the license with a letter of concern regarding completing the application appropriately.
- 2) N.A.C.C.A.S. Open Records Request Release the requested information
- 3) M.K.D. Request for Reconsideration Rescind the previous motion and issue the license with a letter of concern regarding completing the application appropriately.

- | | | |
|-----------|-----------------------------|---|
| 4) C.M. | Request for Reconsideration | Uphold the previous motion. |
| 5) M.Z.B. | Request for Reconsideration | Table for additional information from the Staff Attorney. |

Requests for Reconsideration Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept and ratify the following recommendations made in Executive Session.

- 1) C.T.C. Deny as the reason for the petition is no longer valid.
- 2) J.H. Deny request to renew the license and notify the applicant that he or she must apply for reinstatement.
- 3) T.S. Rescind the previous motion and issue the license.
- 4) Y.W. Table a decision pending results of investigation into program and exam scores.
- 5) L.W. Uphold the previous motion.

Requests for Transcript Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept and ratify the following recommendations made in Executive Session.

- 1) B.K. Grant request to release transcript.
- 2) M.R. Grant request to release transcript.

Ratification List – Consent Orders

Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept and ratify the list of orders issued between board meetings and accept upon receipt.

School Cognizant’s Report – C. Knowles

Discussion – BR 345-3-.02 Application for licensure and BR 345-8-.01

Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to direct staff to amend Board Rule 345-3-.02 in accordance to that which was discussed by the Board and present the proposed amendments to the Board for consideration during the next Board meeting August 28, 2015.

Applications for Board Review Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the following recommendations made in Executive Session:

Arrests

- 1) M.T.W. Request the treatment records for a review by the Board.
- 2) H.Y. Deny licensure based on criminal history and obtain a certified copy of the charging sheet and final disposition to complete the file.

Exam Applicants

- 3) E.M.R. Table a decision until the applicant meets all the requirements for licensure. If the applicant fails to meet the requirements by March 20, 2016, the application will be denied.
- 4) Y.S. Deny licensure based on invalidation of MBLEX scores.

Reinstatements

- 5) L.K.H. Approve Reinstatement for licensure.

Applications for Licensure

- 6) L.C. Deny licensure, the transcript credits do not meet the educational requirements.
- 7) B.J. Deny licensure based on attendance to a school with no NCBTMB School Provider Number in accordance with Board Rule 345-8-.03.
- 8) G.L. Deny licensure based on attendance to a school with no NCBTMB School Provider Number in accordance with Board Rule 345-8-.03.
- 9) H.M. Table a decision, and send notification that the applicant must provide proof of satisfying forty (40) additional hours of education in history and theory prior to the expiration date of the application as the transcript does not meet the educational requirements in accordance with Board Rule 345-8-.01. If documentation not received by the August 18, 2015, the application is denied.
- 10) J.S. Table a decision and request supporting documentation from school and applicant which verifies the dates the applicant attended the school and completed all hours listed on the transcript through the submission of the applicant’s student file.
- 11) C.S. Deny licensure based on attendance to a school with no NCBTMB School Provider Number in accordance with Board Rule 345-8-.03.
- 12) S.W. Deny licensure based on attendance to a school with no NCBTMB School Provider Number in accordance with Board Rule 345-8-.03.
- 13) C.X. Deny licensure in accordance with Board Rule 345-8-.03 based on attendance to a school with a suspended NCBTMB School Provider Number.
- 14) H.Z. Deny licensure based on attendance to a school with no NCBTMB School Provider Number in accordance with Board Rule 345-8-.03.
- 15) Y.Z. Table a decision and request the applicant to appear at the next meeting with documentation supporting dates of attendance to the school and proof of completion of all hours listed on the transcript.

Miscellaneous

Ms. Johnson motioned, Ms. Clay seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to Open a complaint case on each of the individuals identified on written correspondence to the Board for violation of O.C.G.A. § 43-24A-16 and 43-24A-19(2) by engaging in unlicensed practice and issue a cease and desist order to each respondent and their massage therapy educational program for aiding and abetting unlicensed practice.

Adjournment With no further business to be discussed, the meeting was adjourned at 1:55pm

Minutes recorded by:

Tamara Elliott, Board Support Specialist

Minutes reviewed and edited by:

Kathy Osier, Licensing Supervisor & Adrienne Price, Executive Director

Minutes approved on:

August 28, 2015

CRAIG KNOWLES
BOARD CHAIR

ADRIENNE PRICE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June 1, 2015

Ms. Che's Massage Therapy Class
International School of Skin Nailcare & Massage Therapy
5600 Roswell Road NE, Suite 10 Student Clinic
Atlanta, GA 30342
404-843-1005

Lisa Durden, Director of Office of Secretary of State
Professional Licensing Boards Division
GA State Board of Massage Therapy
237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, GA 31217

Dear Ms. Durden:

On behalf of my Fellow Massage Therapy Students at ISSNMT in Sandy Springs, GA, I wish to communicate the following arguments regarding the proposed amendment to Rule 345-6-.02, specifically line C which states that a student may not "accept any compensation...in the form of gifts, tips or rewards while in student status..." We the student body at ISSNMT feel the existing provision permitting students to receive unsolicited tips is essential to the educational and overall experience WHILE IN STUDENT STATUS for the following reasons:

The clients of ISSNMT are familiar with quality service, and are not unlike those of any other spa facility offering therapeutic service as recommended by their chiropractors, primary care physicians, and all other healthcare professionals who recognize the significant benefits of massage therapy. Thus, when they offer gratitude in the form of cash tips, it is their wish to do so to insure quality service at every session with these students. Also, the receipt of these tips builds confidence in massage therapy students that they are making desired progress in the services they are learning to provide, in the real-world environment of ISSNMT Spa.

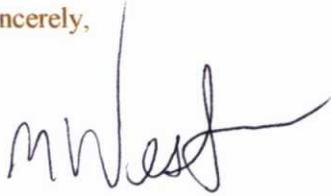
Additionally, the funds that we as students are able to set aside for our State Board Exam Fee and all associated fees are offset by the receipt of gratuity in the form of cash tips, for which we are very grateful.

RECEIVED
SOS/PLB
ACCOUNTING

2015 JUN -4 AM 12:00

We thank you for hearing our arguments and look forward to your decision.

Sincerely,



Michael West and Fellow Students



Shubay Comer

Akira Strong

Colleen Doney

Mally Malin

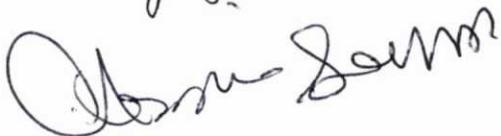
Marlone Brown

Leslie Harris

Lateasha Brown

Jushe Sauced

Caroly Jullien



Catisha Jackson

Abdou Kamara



Alicia Rankin

Kathryn Ballard

214 Foster Street
Cornelia, Georgia 30531
706.540.0494
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June 12, 2015

Ms. Lisa W. Durden, Director
Office of Secretary of State
Professional Licensing Boards Division
Georgia State Board of Massage Therapy
237 Coliseum Drive
Macon, Georgia 31217

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I am writing to provide input about the proposed amendment to rule 35-04-.02, part 2B. Please share this with the board members present at the meeting on June 12, 2015. I am writing to ask that you not make this rule change.

The proposal eliminates many types of therapy from the options for continuing education, stating that they are outside the scope of practice of massage therapy. However, we learned about many of these modalities in the massage therapy training that I received from the ASHA School of Massage. That training prepared me well to take and pass the board exam for the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCBTMB). It seems to me that, by eliminating these types of therapy from the massage therapist's repertoire, the Georgia board will be severely and unnecessarily limiting the work that Georgia massage therapists can do. The practice of massage therapy encompasses more than just traditional Western approaches, such as Swedish massage. Please do not take away the benefits that such important and effective modalities as reflexology, Rolfing, Polarity therapy, and Reiki can add to the massage therapist's work. Instead, please consider our national standard set by the NCBTMB: massage therapy goes hand in hand with bodywork. If NCBTMB does not limit the modalities listed in the proposed rule change, then neither should the Georgia Licensing Board. In fact, the NCBTMB recently issued a statement that explains its change in perspective concerning acceptable continuing education. This statement (excerpt below) shows the balance that the NCBTMB is creating between respecting an appropriate and safe scope of practice while still allowing massage therapists to learn about other modalities.

NCBTMB Board Certified Massage Therapists are required to seek out and participate in additional continuing education courses to further advance practitioner skills and competencies, strengthen business skills, enhance modality knowledge and professional ethics, and develop a greater depth of advanced knowledge in order to demonstrate higher standards and skills than entry-level, state licensed massage therapists. It has come to the attention of NCBTMB that several Board Certificants are currently taking more advanced courses. Advanced courses and modalities are important to our profession to further elevate practitioners' knowledge in science, business, and other realms—but may not necessarily be practiced legally without a

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June 12, 2015

trained professional present. NCBTMB stands firm that all massage therapists—certified or not—may NOT practice beyond their legal Scope of Practice. **It is important to note, however, that NCBTMB does encourage massage therapists to further educate themselves in other professions to better understand how to communicate and collaborate with other medical professionals to provide the best possible care for clients.** Any massage therapist who wishes to practice other modalities outside of the Massage Therapy Scope of Practice must first attend and successfully graduate from that program. (National Certification Board of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork https://gallery.mailchimp.com/aacfd5bc8992a6b00f2e4ba77/files/NCBTMB_Advanced_Science_Courses_for_Board_Renewal_2015.pdf, bold font added).

I am writing to ask you not to make this rule change. If you would like to discuss this further, I am happy to talk with you by email or by phone.

Thank you in advance for your careful consideration of this matter which will affect all Georgia massage therapists and our clients.

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Kathryn Ballard, Nationally Certified Massage Therapist and Bodyworker