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REP. ANDREW O. BRENNER

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Chairwoman Anielski, Vice Chair Hambley, Ranking Member Holmes, and members of the State and Local Government Committee, thank you for hearing sponsor testimony on House Bill 717.

House Bill 717 will give townships flexibility in the regulation of massage establishments such as compliance with zoning, restricted hours of operation, etc. Current law (R.C. 503.40 – 503.50) allows a township the option of requiring registration of massage establishments and masseurs/masseuses. Registration is currently a prerequisite to any additional regulations.

This bill keeps the option of requiring registration but dispenses with the registration requirements being a prerequisite to further regulation. Additionally, the bill will create a third degree misdemeanor criminal penalty for failure to have the requisite state occupational and professional licenses a township may require for a person to perform massages in the township and to make changes to the current registration requirement.

The idea for this bill was brought to my attention by a township trustee residing in my district. She and her fellow trustees have been contending with issues surrounding several massage establishments located within the township, even to the point of involving local law enforcement due to suspicions of human trafficking.

House Bill 717 will afford townships the same flexibility and tools as municipalities to provide the best consumer protections and highest quality of services and help prevent human trafficking within their communities. Madam Chair and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to give sponsor testimony on House Bill 717 and I am happy to answer any questions at this time.