



Senator Andrew O. Brenner – 19th District
Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid
April 3, 2019
Senate Bill 105 – Sponsor Testimony

Chairman Burke, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee, thank you for hearing sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 105, which will update the laws governing massage establishments and massage therapy law.

This legislation was modeled after the action of several municipalities in the state to combat bad actors in their cities, using the guise of legitimate massage to conduct criminal activity. As we have seen in numerous articles in our papers, too often are these bad actors hurting our communities and some of our most vulnerable citizens. I have linked here, a few articles that deal with these bad actors right here, in our own backyards and I encourage you to peruse them. (<http://www.fox19.com/2019/02/01/investigation-underway-green-township-massage-parlors/>) (<https://www.thisweeknews.com/news/20180814/worthington-police-massage-parlor-raid-related-to-human-trafficking-investigation>) (https://www.nbc4i.com/local-news/westerville-massage-parlor-shut-down-during-police-investigation_20180403063737565/1096353104) (<https://www.thisweeknews.com/news/20190205/powell-massage-parlors-to-see-more-scrutiny>)

I believe this legislation will give Ohio townships those same tools and will help streamline the process for owning and operating massage establishments in Ohio.

In addition to setting guidelines for massage establishments, this legislation will also require any individual practicing massage within the state to obtain the current massage therapy license issued by the State Medical Board. There is an extremely large loophole in current law which allows any individual to perform massage without a license, so long as the activity is advertised as something other than massage therapy, i.e. “relaxation massage” or “Asian massage”. Ohio is currently one of the only states that require a license to practice massage therapy, but also allows for unlicensed massage.

The overarching goal of this legislation is to shrink the means through which human traffickers move and prostitute men, women, and children. I refer you to the articles above for further proof that these heinous crimes are happening right here in Ohio. Not only are these criminals harming such vulnerable populations, but they are also tarnishing the reputations of reputable and needed massage therapy businesses. As townships are creatures of statute, it is incumbent upon us, the legislature, to ensure that we are providing them with the necessary tools to create a safe and productive environment for their residents and our constituents.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to give sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 105 and I would be happy to answer any questions you have at this time.