

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chairman Antani, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Health committee, my name is Rick Greely. I would like to thank you for bringing Senate Bill 55 before this committee and allowing me the opportunity to testify. I have been a licensed massage therapist (LMT) for over 31 years. In that time, I have served as President of the American Massage Therapy Association two times, served as chair of the State Medical Board Advisory Committee, and have educated many therapists as a teacher at Columbus State.

As you have heard from my colleagues at previous committee hearings, Senate Bill 55 is a much needed piece of legislation. Ohio is currently the only state in the Country that requires a license for massage therapy, but also allows massage to be practiced without a license. A loophole currently exists in Ohio law that allows individuals to perform massage, as long as they do not call what they are doing "massage therapy" or advertise their practice as "medical" or "therapeutic massage". Senate Bill 55 closes this loophole to make it a fair and safe business environment for therapists, staff, and consumers of massage services.

This loophole allows bad actors to use massage as a front for illicit activity, such as prostitution and human trafficking. These are the most egregious examples, but at a minimum unlicensed and untrained massage can lead to injury to the patient or improper use of equipment.

Recently, misuse of a massage therapy license happened surrounding the Ohio State football program. A massage therapist, with no connection to The Ohio State University or their Athletic Department, had to surrender her license to the State of Ohio and the State Medical Board permanently revoked her license due to "sexual misconduct". Under current law and Ohio's "loophole", this individual could continue to see and be paid by patients as long as she does not claim to be doing "massage therapy".

Senate Bill 55 is desperately needed to protect the women who are the victims of Human Trafficking, the public looking for legitimate massage and the many, many Licensed Massage Therapists working diligently to promote massage for non-narcotic pain control. I ask that you please support Senate Bill 55 in this committee.

Thank you for your time, and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.