



# Dayton School of Medical Massage

December 15, 2020

The Honorable Senator Rob McColley

Chairman Transportation, Commerce & Workforce Committee

1 Capitol Square-Ground Floor

Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Senator McColley,

We are representing the Dayton School of Medical Massage and its four branch campuses (The Cincinnati School of Medical Massage, Cleveland Institute of Medical Massage, Columbus School of Medical Massage and the Dayton School of Medical Massage-Lima) we are here in opposition to the proposed changes to the educational requirements to become a massage therapist proposed in HB 442.

Our schools have been educating students in Ohio to become Licensed Massage Therapists since 1995. Students receive comprehensive instruction in ethics, massage theory & practicum, anatomy & physiology, pathology, business as well as 105 hours clinical experience in our student clinics. Additionally, our graduates take a national test, submit an FBI/BCI background check and apply to the State Medical Board of Ohio to receive a license of Limited Branch of Medicine as a Massage Therapist. This is by no means an easy course of instruction but is necessary to ensure that therapists have the knowledge and skill level necessary to provide proper treatment to their clients.

We are very concerned that lowering the educational requirements to become a massage therapist could leave many students unprepared or under prepared to become gainfully employed massage therapists. Our curriculum was created and refined with feedback from major employers including additional clinical experience and soft skills and has led to a nearly 90% placement of licensed graduates. We can only accomplish this with the higher hours required by the state.

Additional issues created by the lowering of the hours include:

1. Financial Aid.

- a. Lowering the educational hours from 750 hours to 600 will have an impact on the students ability to pay for their education.
- b. Program would fall below the threshold of a fulltime program reducing the amount of potential financial aid available to each student. (900 hours over minimum of 24 weeks is considered full time)
- c. Decreased financial aid would result in higher out of pocket expenses for students and could impact at risk students disproportionately.
- d. Although this is the minimum hours the US Department of Education places maximums on the amount of hours over the minimum that a school may offer thus reducing the students ability to receive additional Pell and loans for living expenses necessary for many students to attend.

2. Clinical Experience
  - a. Real world clinical experience is an essential part of their education.
  - b. Students will receive less Clinical experience in order to allow for the didactic education required to pass the national licensure test.
  - c. Major employers in Ohio including Massage Envy, Hand & Stone , Elements and others have requested that students receive more clinical experience so that they have the experience, confidence and stamina to be able to immediately handle clients with little to no learning curve.
  
3. MBLEx Pass Rates-
  - a. The Massage and Bodywork License Examination is the national test required for licensure in the State of Ohio.
  - b. We are concerned the pass rate will be reduced with the reduction of the hours.
  - c. State of Ohio pass rate 82%
  - d. Schools of Medical Massage pass rate 92%
  - e. National pass rate 64.5%
  - f.
  
4. Other states requirements
  - a. 13 other states have hours that are above the proposed 600 hours in Ohio.
    - i. Nebraska & New York at 1000
    - ii. North Dakota & Connecticut 750
    - iii. Mississippi & Arizona 700
  - b. Recently other state have increased their requirements including Indiana and Connecticut.

We understand the spirit and intent of the bill in trying to make careers like massage therapy more accessible, but the unintended consequence is that it may actually be making it harder for them to attend school and receive the comprehensive education necessary to become successfully employed.

Best Regards,

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 Schools of Medical Massage

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 Vice President of Operations  
 Schools of Medical Massage

Sarah Brannon  
 Director of Compliance & Education  
 Schools of Medical Massage

**Dayton School of Medical Massage   Cleveland Institute of Medical Massage   Columbus School of Medical Massage  
 Cincinnati School of Medical Massage   Dayton School of Medical Massage- Lima**

