

February 8, 2013

Re: Oregon Senate Bill 387- Support

Dear Oregon Senate Health Care and Human Services Committee Members,

My name is Susannah Graven and I have held a license to practice massage therapy in the state of Oregon since June 2003. I have owned and operated my own medical massage practice in Medford since receiving my license to practice massage therapy. Over the course of the last ten years I have been an educator for seven of those years for the Ashland Institute of Massage instructing their business development program which also included Massage Ethics and Oregon Massage Law. I have also been the owner and operator of The Healing Chair (2005-2011), a corporate massage business that contracted other license massage therapists to work in the corporate environment practicing chair massage. I am also an active business mentor in Southern Oregon for other massage therapists who are interested in owning and operating their own massage therapy business. However, above all my other professional pursuits my first love is practicing the art of massage therapy.

One of the challenges of being a massage therapist is having an educated clientele. There are so many different modalities in regards to massage therapy that it can, at times, confuse the general public as to what form of therapy they will be receiving when utilizing a new therapist. This is one reason why I highly recommend people are referred to a licensed massage therapist for their appropriate need. Sadly, there are people in our local community who completely misuse and misrepresent the massage industry for means which is completely unrelated to what an actual licensed massage therapist is licensed to do. In southern Oregon this has become a situation with specific businesses operating as a legitimate massage business when instead these businesses are clearly putting our public at risk by having their contractors practice sexual activities in these specific businesses. I am compelled not only as a professional for my industry but also as a citizen to do my part that will create means to stop operations like these from equating themselves to massage therapy.

I am offering my support to Oregon Senate Bill 387 to amend the verbiage so that the Oregon Board of Massage Therapists can over see not just massage therapists in the state of Oregon but also the facilities owners and operators which employ licensed massage therapists. I believe that the proposed fee is a nominal price to pay that gives our industry a gain in the pursuit of stopping the sex trade as well as potentially human trafficking in our state. Senate Bill 387 is not just protecting our public, practitioners but ultimately human beings from all nations that may be actively exploited and potentially in harms way.

Sincerely,

Susannah Graven L.M.T.
Oregon license #10482