

**Testimony of the Board of Massage Therapy**

**Before the  
House Committee on Finance  
Wednesday, March 31, 2021  
2:30 p.m.  
Via Videoconference**

**On the following measure:  
S.B. 599, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, RELATING TO MASSAGE THERAPISTS**

Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

My name is Risé Doi, and I am the Executive Officer of the Board of Massage Therapy (Board). The Board supports this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to, beginning July 1, 2024, require massage therapy licensees to complete twelve hours of continuing education (CE) within the two-year period preceding the renewal date, two hours of which shall include first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or emergency-related courses.

The Board supports this bill because that twelve CE hours is a reasonable requirement for renewal and raises the level of professionalism for massage therapists. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation requirements have changed over the years and should be required for renewal of licensure. The Board has also discussed potentially defining the parameters of the CE courses in its administrative rules.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



amta  
american **massage therapy** association®

500 Davis Street, Suite 900 | Evanston, IL 60201-4695 | Toll-free 877.905.2700 | Fax 847.556.1436

[info@amtamassage.org](mailto:info@amtamassage.org) | [amtamassage.org](http://amtamassage.org)

March 31, 2021

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

My name is Olivia Nagashima, and I am testifying in my role as the President of the American Massage Therapy Association – Hawaii Chapter. More than 8,000 state licensed massage therapists currently practice in Hawaii.

Our chapter **supports SB599 SD1 HD1**. We view this bill as an effort to elevate the massage therapy profession to the highest standards of quality and safety. By requiring 12 hours of continuing education courses every two years, including CPR training, first aid, or other emergency training, Hawaii residents can be assured they are being treated by a professional who has studied the most current trends and best practices of our industry. For context, continuing education is required in 40 states when relicensing massage therapists.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and we urge you to pass SB599 SD1 HD1.

### AMTA Board of Directors

President Angela Barker | President-Elect Steve Albertson | Immediate Past President Christopher Deery  
Directors Christine Bailor-Goodlander, Michael Colizza, Pat Collins, Robert C. Jantsch, Jane Johnson, Kimberly Kane-Santos,  
Scott Raymond, Ed Sansbury, LaDonna Ward | Executive Director Bill Brown

Rick Rosen, MA, LMT  
Post Office Box 339, Honomu, Hawaii 96728

**Testimony Before the House Committee on Finance  
Wednesday, March 31, 2021, 2:30 pm  
via Videoconference on the following measure:  
SB 599, SD 1, HD 1, RELATING TO MASSAGE THERAPISTS**

WRITTEN and VIDEO TESTIMONY

Aloha Representative Luke and Distinguished Committee Members,

I have been a licensed massage therapist for 42 years, first in Florida, then North Carolina, and now in Hawaii. I served as the founding chairman of the NC Board of Massage & Bodywork Therapy, and went on to serve as co-founder and executive director of the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards. I also started the first school of massage therapy in the Carolinas (Body Therapy Institute), which operated from 1983-2017. I'm a member of the American Massage Therapy Association.

I have studied and advocated for massage regulation across the country, in terms of entry-level standards for licensure, continuing education requirements for license renewal, and regulations for massage therapy educational institutions.

**I am writing today in qualified support of Senate Bill 599.** I believe it is in the general public interest to amend Section 452-16, HRS by adding a continuing education (CE) requirement for licensed massage therapists. However, there is **one critical issue** I want to bring to your attention as you consider this measure:

**As massage therapists are NOT front-line healthcare providers, it is unnecessary to require them to take ongoing training in First Aid, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation or other emergency-related courses.**

LMTs rarely – if ever – deal with health emergencies with their clients.

*Therefore, no demonstrable public benefit exists to justify this requirement.*

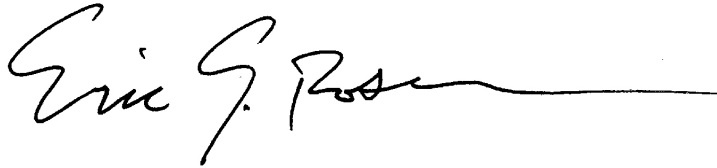
Note that of the 26 states that require First Aid/CPR certification for initial massage licensure (which includes Hawaii), only five of those states require continued training in this subject area for license renewal.

If this First Aid/CPR requirement is adopted, it will actually be **detrimental to public protection**, because LMTs will be earning fewer hours of continuing education each biennium in courses that are directly related to their massage therapy scope of practice.

Given these considerations, I humbly recommend that Sections 1 and 2 of this bill be amended to **delete the requirement that two of the continuing education hours be in First Aid, CPR or emergency-related courses.** I have taken the liberty to include a copy of SB 599 below, with suggested amendments shown in red.

These changes will strengthen the bill and will improve the ability of the Board of Massage Therapy to meet its mandate of public protection.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric G. Rosen", followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Eric G. (Rick) Rosen  
License # MAT-14321

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO MASSAGE THERAPISTS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the practice of  
2 massage therapy in the State affects public health and safety.  
3 As a matter of public interest and concern, massage therapist  
4 licensees should regularly maintain their knowledge and  
5 education ~~and receive basic first aid and emergency-related~~  
6 ~~training~~ through mandatory continuing education requirements, in  
7 addition to understanding the ethical implications of  
8 advertising and promoting the practice of massage.

9           Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require massage  
10 therapist licensees, beginning with the renewal for the  
11 licensing biennium commencing on July 1, 2024, and every  
12 biennial renewal thereafter, to complete twelve hours of  
13 continuing education within the two-year period preceding the  
14 renewal date, ~~of which two hours shall include first aid,~~  
15 ~~cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or other emergency-related~~  
16 ~~course.~~

1 SECTION 2. Section 452-16, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
2 amended to read as follows:

3 **"§452-16 Renewal of license; fees~~l~~]; continuing**

4 **education.** (a) Massage therapist and massage therapy  
5 establishment licenses shall expire on June 30 of each even-  
6 numbered year following the date of issuance unless renewed for  
7 the next biennium. These licenses may be renewed by filing an  
8 application therefor, accompanied by a renewal fee~~[-]~~ and  
9 submitting proof of compliance with the continuing education  
10 requirements established by subsection (b). The application  
11 shall be made between May 1 and June 30 of each even-numbered  
12 year. Failure to apply for renewal as provided in this section  
13 shall constitute a forfeiture of the license as of the date of  
14 expiration. Any license so forfeited may be restored within one  
15 year after expiration upon the filing of an application in the  
16 same manner, submitting proof of compliance with the continuing  
17 education requirements established by subsection (b), and  
18 payment of a penalty fee in addition to all delinquent fees.  
19 Thereafter, the person shall apply as a new applicant and the  
20 board may require the person to take and pass the examination  
21 and satisfy all requirements for the examination, including

1 training, if the board is not satisfied that the person  
2 possesses current knowledge and skills for the practice of  
3 massage therapy.

4 (b) Beginning with the renewal for the licensing biennium  
5 commencing on July 1, 2024, and every biennial renewal  
6 thereafter, each massage therapist licensee shall submit proof  
7 of having completed twelve hours of continuing education within  
8 the two-year period preceding the renewal date, ~~of which two~~  
9 ~~hours shall include first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or~~  
10 ~~other emergency-related courses.~~ The board shall adopt rules  
11 relating to the requirements and standards that continuing  
12 education programs shall meet to obtain recognition and approval  
13 from the board.

14 (c) The board may conduct random audits of licensees to  
15 determine compliance with the continuing education requirements  
16 of subsection (b). The board shall provide written notice of an  
17 audit to a licensee randomly selected for audit. Within sixty  
18 days of notification, the licensee shall provide the board with  
19 documentation verifying compliance with the continuing education  
20 requirements established by subsection (b)."

1           SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
2 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

3           SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2050.



Report Title:

Massage Therapists; Licenses; Renewals; Continuing Education

Description:

Beginning 7/1/2024, requires massage therapy licensees to complete twelve hours of continuing education within the two-year period preceding the renewal date, ~~of which two hours shall include first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or other emergency related courses.~~ Effective 1/1/2050. (HDI)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

**LATE**

**SB-599-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 4:56:25 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jenny Lee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Testimony for Senate Bill 599 RELATING TO MASSAGE THERAPISTS**

**Aloha Chair Sylvia Luke, Vice Chair Ty Cullen, and members of the committee,**

**Thank you for allowing me to submit my testimony. My name is Jenny and I live in Honolulu. I am a licensed massage therapist.**

**I am here to submit my testimony to support SB599 HD1 which states that beginning 7/1/2024, licensed massage therapists are to complete and submit twelve hours of continuing education within the two-year period preceding the renewal date, of which two hours shall include first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or other emergency related courses.**

**As a professional, continuing education can be beneficial for us as a therapist and also to our practice and clients. It can help us to remain inspired and by challenging ourselves to learn new topics and can help us to update our practice. It is a great way to expand into other cultural modalities which can contribute to our current skills set, which is perfect because we live in a place with so many different ethnic backgrounds and different healing practices. It can also help us to reduce professional liability by training us to reduce risk of injury to ourselves and to clients. Overall, it promotes a higher standard of massage therapy through the need of completion of the certification process and continuing education.**

**However, it is in my opinion that certification and continuing education regulation is a relatively new process that does not have enough individuals regulating the**

**industry to make sure that those who are massaging are indeed certified with credentials that are up to date. I don't feel that enough is being done to shut down massage parlors that profit from sexual services and this is a concerning problem because it victimizes the workers and promotes human trafficking and domestic violence. Incarcerating these individuals does not help the problem either and there needs to more effective and humane ways to address this issue. We need better regulations to protect the practitioners and to incarcerate the individuals who are soliciting these services.**

**The massage license process is extremely time-consuming and I've worked hard to build a reputable image in this industry. Unlicensed individuals and unlicensed massage businesses reinforce the idea to the mass population that massage therapists are associated with prostitution. I, myself, being a female asian licensed massage therapist, have been solicited at work for more than just a therapeutic massage multiple times. The reason why we are required to have a license and required to pursue continuing education is because we are recognized professionals. There needs to be more background checks and inspections for businesses. Please help us to ensure the professional reputation of massage therapy so that it is not tarnished by illegal and questionable activity.**

**Thank you for your time,**

**Jenny Lee**