

Testimony of the Board of Massage Therapy

**Before the
Senate Committee on Commerce & Consumer Protection
Wednesday, February 24, 2021
9:30 a.m.
Via Videoconference**

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

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Chair Baker 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 notes that twelve CE hours is a reasonable requirement for renewal and raises the level of professionalism for massage therapists. The Board expressed that cardiopulmonary resuscitation requirements have changed over the years and should be required for renewal of licensure. The Board 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®

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February 24, 2021

Aloha Chair Baker, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection:

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**. 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.

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

SB-599-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2021 4:36:27 PM

Testimony for CPN on 2/24/2021 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nancy Campbell	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

I have been a Licensed Massage Therapist for 16 years. My first 11 years in the State of NC and my recent 5 in HI. I have taken approximately 1000 hours of continuing education (CE) since my initial licensure and have a successful massage practice to show for it. I am a Nationally Certified Practitioner, and a CE provider. I am use to having the CE requirements for renewal for NC and have found no issue in finding, paying, and completing them each renewal period - even here in HI. As a professional, I am pleased to see Hawaii is passing a bill requiring 12 hours per renewal. I think it's a great start to upleveling our profession in the medical and wellness community a well as in the eye of Hawaii's public.

I believe that CPR and First Aid is important for Massage Therapists to know and be comfortable to perform in the event of an emergency. Since the requirement for CE will be only 12 hours per renewal, which is way below National Standard, **I highly recommend that the 2 hour CPR/First Aid/Emergency Care requirement be in additon to the 12 hours to be alloted to professional development to the Therapist's massage practice. I also recommend that 2 hours of the proposed 12 be alloted to Ethics.** I believe this will be a better way to serve the public. This standard is common among other states and the 2 main Massage Therapy Associations that support US Therapists.

The National Certification Board of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (<https://www.ncbtmb.org/>) is a governing board setting educational standards. The board approves classes before they can be taught for CE credit. I highly recommend that this be used as a valuable resource for updating this bill. Hawaii should not be the last state elevating its public standards in this matter.

Thank you for your time and energy in this matter. I would be happy to speak with anyone further for more input.

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

February 22, 2021

Hawaii State Legislature
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair

Re: TESTIMONY ON SB 599 | RELATING TO MASSAGE THERAPISTS

Dear Senator Baker 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.

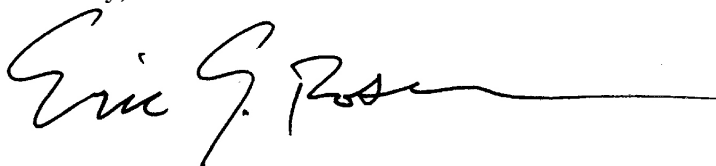
I have studied massage regulation across the country, in terms of entry-level standards for licensure, continuing education requirements for license renewal, and regulations for massage therapy educational institutions.

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, I have two concerns about this bill:

- 1) The number of required hours of CE per biennium (12) is low. I have done an analysis of CE requirements across the country; the range is from 4 – 12.5 hours per year, with an average of 9.6 hours. At 12 hours per biennium (or 6 hours per year), the Hawaii standard as set forth in this bill would be 50% lower than the national average established by state boards of massage therapy. This is not in the public interest.
- 2) As massage therapists are not front-line healthcare providers, it is unnecessary to require them to take ongoing training in first aid, CPR or other emergency measures. Is there data that shows LMTs regularly deal with health emergencies with their clients? I would suggest that the number of such actual events handled by LMTs each year is miniscule, if present at all. Required CE hours would be more beneficial if they related to the defined scope of practice.

Given these two concerns, I humbly recommend that Section 2 of this bill be amended to a) increase the biennial CE requirement to twenty-four (24) hours; and b) that the requirement that two of these hours be in emergency protocols be deleted.

Sincerely,



Eric G. (Rick) Rosen

From: [Lorraine Newman](#)
To: [CPN Committee](#)
Subject: Hawaii HB 223 / SB 599
Date: Tuesday, February 23, 2021 8:21:58 PM



Aloha from Kilauea, Kauai,

I have been a licensed massage therapist in the state of Hawaii since 1993. I am also a long standing member of the Associated Bodywork and Massage Professionals (ABMP), through which I obtain insurance for my practice.

There are currently 2 bills being considered by the house and senate that propose new regulations for Hawaii message therapists:
HB 223 and senate bill SB 599.

SB 599 will:

(1) Require massage therapist licensees, beginning with the renewal for the licensing biennium commencing on July 1, 2024, and every biennial renewal thereafter, to complete twelve hours of continuing education within the two-year period preceding the renewal date, two hours of which shall include first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or emergency-related course; and

(2) Modify and update advertising limitations and penalties.

HB 223 proposes essentially the same changes to current law except the start date is 2 years earlier.

Quite frankly, I was unable to locate any verbiage related to SB 599 #2 in the version of the bill I read, so I will just speak to the proposed change stated in #1.

I am opposed to the passage of this bill, and I encourage you to seriously to consider my position:

This bill reads as an idea to help make Hawaii massage therapists better and safer practitioners.

Which raises the question, "Is the current situation broken such that it needs fixing?"

While I'll be the first to acknowledge that there are bad apples in every bunch, to my awareness the process for licensing massage therapists in Hawaii has been working quite well.

To the point about requiring continuing education (CE) hours, please hear me when I say that showing proof of earning a certain number of CE hours will have little to no effect on improving our skill sets.

When a massage therapist wants deeper knowledge in a particular area, or to train in specific techniques, s/he will seek out particular teachers, seminars, etc.

Most of the time this involves hands-on in-person teaching, but of course there are now some great courses available online.

The point is, by nature massage therapy is a hands-on healing art, and while one can learn anatomy and physiology, aromatherapy, etc by reading or watching videos, there is no substitution for hands on learning.

By contrast, passage of SB 599 will accomplish very little towards its intended purpose of making sure massage therapists continue their education in this healing art. Requiring CE hours does nothing to engender the kinds of hands on training that really makes a difference in one's practice.

This bill will require 12 CE hours, but these hours will most likely be acquired through the cheapest and quickest (approved) means... precisely because they are required.

I believe I can safely speak for most of us when I state this.

I know I will go online and earn the credit hours as fast and cheaply as possible, and this will have nothing to do with what I really need or want to develop in the way of my skill set.

I doubt many of you are licensed massage therapists, so let me tell you that this bill sounds smart in theory, but it won't accomplish its aim in practice.

Requiring CE hours that are general rather targeted towards a particular end is not very effective, which renders this bill mostly unnecessary.

Again, what the bill proposes is beneficial in theory only.

This is only partially true in regard to the 2 hours that must include first aid, CPR or emergency related services.

This requirement is targeted, but is passage of an entire bill necessary to ensure partitioners are mindful about knowing what to do in case of an emergency?

Has this been a problem to date?

If so, then I won't argue the point that refresher courses in safety procedures should be encouraged.

Could this same end be accomplished with far less effort and paperwork or time involved in random audits, etc., by offering free (or low cost) biennial training seminars on each island to all licensed massage therapists?

What this bill will accomplish is:

1) More paperwork on everyone's part.

Do we really need this?

Will enforcing this bill be a worthwhile way to be using our tax dollars?

2) Higher expenses for massage therapists and hours of time spent satisfying state requirements which do not necessarily accomplish the intended goal of furthering the educational advancement we may need.

To summarize...

This bill has great intent, but it misses the mark.

The requirement is mostly arbitrary (why 12 CE hours and not 10, 11 or 13?).

The bill will become just another hoop through which massage therapists have to jump - after already doing the work involved in obtaining licenses.

For this reason, most of us will take the most efficient free online courses offered to satisfy the new requirements.

CPR and first aid training could and should be offered to ALL healing arts practitioners on every island at minimal cost, which would go further towards reaching more people and would not require a bill or enforcement hours. A certificate proving participation could be required.

No where is it stated that this bill was proposed to solve a problem.
There is no reason to break something that doesn't need fixing.
If the intent is to improve the quality of massage care in Hawaii, then this bill will not accomplish its intended goal.

Mahalo for listening,
Lorraine Newman

From: [CPN Committee](#)
To: [baker6 - Natalie](#)
Cc: [Allysen Manding](#)
Subject: FW: Hawaii HB 223 / SB 599
Date: Wednesday, February 24, 2021 8:28:12 AM

Can you process the below email as late testimony after the hearing.

Jackie Rosas

Office of Senator Rosalyn Baker

808-586-6070 (voice)

808-586-6071 (fax)

baker1@capitol.hawaii.gov

www.capitol.hawaii.gov

From: Lorraine Newman <alohalorraine@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2021 8:22 PM
To: CPN Committee <CPNCommittee@capitol.hawaii.gov>
Subject: Hawaii HB 223 / SB 599

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