

**Testimony of the Board of Massage Therapy**

**Before the  
House Committee on Finance  
Tuesday, February 23, 2021  
2:00 p.m.  
Via Videoconference**

**On the following measure:  
H.B. 223, 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, beginning July 1, 2022, to 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 the Board's rules.

Lastly, the Board requests amending the implementation date to July 1, 2024, to provide ample notice to affected licensees of the CE requirement and for licensees to meet that requirement prior to license renewal.

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)

February 24, 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 HB223, 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.

### 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  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96728



February 22, 2021

Hawaii State Legislature  
House Committee on Finance  
Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair

Re: TESTIMONY ON HB 223 | RELATING TO MASSAGE THERAPISTS

Dear Rep. 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 am a member of AMTA.

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 House Bill 223.** 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 in Hawaii is miniscule, if present at all. Required CE hours would be more beneficial if they all related to the defined massage therapy 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