

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2781

As of February 22, 2016

Title: An act relating to the board of massage.

Brief Description: Requiring the Washington state board of massage to adopt rules to allow approved massage programs to establish transfer programs.

Sponsors: Representatives Harris, Cody, Senn and Moeller.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/17/16, 98-0.

Committee Activity: Health Care: 2/22/16.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Staff: Evan Klein (786-7483)

Background: Massage therapy is a health care service involving the external manipulation or pressure of soft tissue for therapeutic purposes.

The practice of massage is regulated by the Washington State Board of Massage (Board). The Board regulates the practice of massage therapy and, with respect to training and education, is authorized to:

- define, evaluate, approve, and designate those massage schools, massage programs, and massage apprenticeship programs, including all current and proposed curriculum and faculty standards from which graduation will be accepted as proof of an applicant's eligibility to take the massage licensing examination;
- review approved massage schools and programs periodically; and
- establish by rule the standards and procedures for approving courses of study in massage therapy.

The minimum educational requirements for licensure to practice massage therapy in Washington is successful completion of a course of study from a massage school, program, or apprenticeship program approved by the Board. Application for approval of a school or program must be made by an authorized representative of the school or the administrator of an apprenticeship agreement.

Summary of Bill: The Board is required to adopt rules to allow Board-approved massage programs to establish transfer programs that accept an individual's credits or clock hours

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from schools that have not been approved by the Board, in order to recognize prior education that is applicable to licensure as a massage therapist or massage practitioner.

Prior education includes credits or clock hours from schools, colleges, and universities that are:

- accredited by a national or regional accreditation organization;
- approved by a state authority with responsibility for oversight of vocational programs; or
- approved by a state agency that regulates massage programs and is a member of the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This is a time sensitive bill and the American Massage Therapy Association is in support.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Gail McGaffick, American Massage Therapy Association, WA Chapter.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No One.