

MINUTES

HOUSE COMMERCE & HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

- DATE:** Monday, March 19, 2012
- TIME:** 1:30 p.m. or Upon Adjournment
- PLACE:** Room EW05
- MEMBERS:** Chairman Block (Block), Vice Chairman Hartgen, Representative(s) Lake, Trail, Marriott, Thayn, Simpson, Loertscher, Nessel, Ringo, King
- ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Representative Loertscher
- GUESTS:** Suzanne Budge, lobbyist for American Massage Therapist Association (AMTA); Paul Weston, Susan Beck, and Trisha Pennell, Idaho Chapter, AMTA; Crystal Diane Spicer, Holistic Healing Arts Association; Carol Jean Campbell, New Leaf Healing Arts; Briana Anderson, Carrington College; Jami Slaughter, Massage Therapist; Wayne Pennell, Massage Therapist; Hayley Lowry, Breathe Easy Therapeutic Massage; Debra Mulnick, RN, Holistic Nurse; Justin Solace and Cathy Solace, Broadview University/Hybrid Health; Suzie Lindberg, Well Beings Massage; Linda Chatburn, Myofascial Release Center; Max Greenlee, Risch Pisca; Ryan Fitzgerald, Idaho Association of Chiropractic Physicians
- Vice Chairman Hartgen** called the meeting to order at 2:40 p.m.
- MOTION:** **Representative Thayn** made a motion to approve the minutes of March 15, 2012.
Motion carried by voice vote.
- S 1295:** **Suzanne Budge**, representing AMTA, presented **S 1369**, which adds a new chapter to Idaho Code Title 54 to provide a process for licensing massage therapists. Massage therapy has become an accepted part of conventional medicine to assist patients working to improve their health or recovering from an injury or medical procedure. Currently, individuals may advertise themselves as massage therapists regardless of their level of training or lack thereof. Requiring a license of professional and trained massage therapists will help ensure that citizens seeking this form of therapy will receive appropriate care.
- Ms. Budge** reviewed **S 1295** in detail, including definitions, exemptions, prohibitions, establishment of a board, powers and duties of the board, fees, and requirements for licensure. Ms. Budge said that licensing massage therapists is presently required by 43 other states, including the states contiguous to Idaho, except for Wyoming. The language in **S 1295** was drawn from similar licensing policies by the Idaho Bureau of Occupational Licenses and is broadly supported by that Bureau and two national associations.
- Paul Weston**, Government Relations Chair, AMTA, spoke in support of **S 1295** and emphasized that the legislation will create much needed uniform standards. **Trisha Pennell** and **Susan Beck**, American Massage Therapy Association, Idaho Chapter; **Jami Slaughter** and **Hayley Lowry**, independent massage therapists; **Debra Mulnick**, self-employed holistic nurse; **Justin Solace**, Broadview University/Hybrid Health; **Suzie Lindberg**, Well Beings Massage; and **Linda Chatburn**, Myofascial Release Center, also testified in support of **S 1295**, their rationale being the need to establish guidelines and oversight to protect the customer, standardize fees, and separate the more unsavory elements from the professionals. It was generally felt that most consumers mistakenly assume therapeutic massage specialists are currently licensed.

Crystal Spicer, independent therapeutic massage therapist, testified **in opposition** to **S 1295**, which she feels is unnecessary since many hours of education are already required in Idaho. She said that a better alternative to state licensing would be national certification.

A thorough question-and-answer period ensued relative to fees, advertising, board establishment and makeup, consumer complaints, reciprocity by other states, and language description.

MOTION: **Representative King** made a motion to send **S 1295** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Representatives Simpson** and **Thayn** requested that they be recorded as voting **NAY.** **Representative Marriott** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Representative Hartgen
Vice Chairman

Jeanne Clayton
Secretary