

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1341

As Reported by House Committee On:
Local Government

Title: An act relating to limiting the regulation of the practice of massage by political subdivisions.

Brief Description: Limiting the regulation of the practice of massage by political subdivisions.

Sponsors: Representatives Simpson, Curtis, Ericks and Alexander.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government: 1/25/07, 1/30/07 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Repeals the statute authorizing local governments to license and regulate massage practitioners.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Simpson, Chair; Eddy, Vice Chair; Curtis, Ranking Minority Member; Schindler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Ross, B. Sullivan and Takko.

Staff: Thamas Osborn (786-7129).

Background:

The practice of massage and massage therapy is regulated under state law. The regulation of massage practitioners includes the following:

- state licensing and examination requirements;
- restrictions on certain advertising practices; and
- disciplinary standards and procedures.

The regulation of massage practitioners is overseen by the Washington State Board of Massage (Board). The Board is authorized to adopt administrative rules pertaining to the regulation of the massage profession and is granted specified powers with respect to the:

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- evaluation and approval of massage schools and training programs;
- administration of licensing examinations; and
- establishment of the rules, standards, and procedures regarding the training of practitioners.

The regulation of the massage profession is not exclusive to the state. Statute explicitly allows local governments to impose regulations, require local licenses, charge fees, and levy taxes.

Summary of Bill:

Statutory provisions authorizing local governments to license and regulate massage practitioners are repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill is needed so that licensed massage practitioners are treated the same as members of other licensed professions. It is unfair to discriminate against massage practitioners by making them subject to overlapping regulations by both the state and local governments. Accordingly, this bill should be passed so as to ensure that massage practitioners receive equal regulatory treatment.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Melanie Stewart, American Massage Therapy Association Washington Chapter.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.