

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESSB 5403

C 70 L 07

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Certifying animal massage practitioners.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Agriculture & Rural Economic Development (originally sponsored by Senators Rasmussen, Brandland and Jacobsen).

Senate Committee on Agriculture & Rural Economic Development

House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources

House Committee on Appropriations

Background: In 2001, Washington enacted a program whereby licensed massage practitioners could receive an additional endorsement on their licenses to also perform massage on animals. To receive this license endorsement, a person who is already licensed to perform massage on humans would be required to take an additional 100 hours of training in animal massage. To obtain a license as a human massage practitioner, the State Board of Massage requires 500 hours of training that is to be completed over at least a six month period. Schools that offer these classes are required to receive prior approval from the Department of Health (DOH). Graduates are required to pass a written examination and a practical demonstration of massage therapy.

There is an interest in the development of an animal massage certification program that would allow persons to take training in animal massage without first having to be licensed as a human massage therapist.

Summary: Persons who wish to practice massage only on animals may obtain certification from the DOH by taking 300 hours of training in either small or large animal massage in courses approved by the DOH. Certification and renewal fees to support the program will be adopted by rule. For persons who have had training in animal massage in other states, the DOH will determine whether the training is substantially equivalent to that required in this state and whether additional training is needed before taking the examination.

The Uniform Disciplinary Act applies to this category of certified animal massage practitioner and will be administered by the DOH. Nothing in the act prohibits or restricts: (1) the practice of veterinary medicine; (2) the practice of animal massage by persons who have the additional endorsement under their human massage license; (3) students performing massage in the regular course of instruction; (4) animal owners or their employees that perform massage on the owner's animal; or (5) performing massage for free.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	48	0
House	95	2

Effective: July 22, 2007