

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5097

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As of January 18, 2019

**Title:** An act relating to the licensure and certification of massage therapists and reflexologists.

**Brief Description:** Concerning the licensure and certification of massage therapists and reflexologists.

**Sponsors:** Senators Cleveland, Wilson, L., Keiser and Kuderer.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long Term Care: 1/18/19.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires licensed massage therapists and certified reflexologists to have a government-issued photo identification that bears the same name as their massage therapy license or reflexology certification whenever they practice massage therapy or reflexology.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG TERM CARE

**Staff:** Greg Attanasio (786-7410)

**Background:** Massage Therapists. Massage therapists are licensed by the Department of Health (DOH) to practice massage, which involves the external manipulation or pressure of soft tissue for therapeutic purposes. To obtain a massage therapy license, an applicant must provide proof to DOH that they have successfully completed an approved massage therapy program or apprenticeship, successfully completed an examination approved by the Washington State Board of Massage, and are at least eighteen years old. Massage therapists must clearly display their massage therapy license at their place of business or have a copy of the license available while they are practicing.

Reflexologists. Reflexologists are certified by DOH to practice reflexology, which is a health care service limited to applying alternating pressure with thumb and finger techniques to reflexive areas of the lower extremities, feet, hands, and outer ears based on reflex maps. To be certified an applicant must provide proof to DOH that they have successfully completed an approved reflexology program, successfully completed an approved

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examination, and are at least eighteen years old. Reflexologists must clearly display their reflexology certification at their place of business or have a copy of the certification available while they are practicing.

**Summary of Bill:** The bill as referred to committee not considered.

**Summary of Bill (Proposed Substitute):** A licensed massage therapist or a certified reflexologist must have government-issued photo identification on their person or have it available for inspection by law enforcement or DOH personnel at all times while practicing massage therapy or reflexology. The identification must bear the same name as their massage therapy license or reflexology certification.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Proposed Substitute:** PRO: The identification requirement would not add an additional financial burden or inconvenience for practitioners and it would provide an additional tool for law enforcement to fight sex trafficking. Massage therapists support the bill and law enforcement's efforts to stop sex trafficking.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Melanie Stewart, American Massage Therapy Association, Washington Chapter; Brian Enslow, City of Vancouver; Anne McEnerny-Ogle, Mayor, City of Vancouver.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.