

3203



From: Jessica Burns
To: ST. Regulatory Counsel
Subject: Regulation #16A-724 (IRRC #3203)
Date: Monday, July 2, 2018 4:34:53 PM

As a licensed massage therapist in Pennsylvania, I appreciate the progress and standards that licensing has provided for our field of work. With that in mind, I would still like to address the proposed increase in biannual renewal costs from \$75 to \$200.

As the proposal points out, the majority of massage therapists are self-employed, which unfortunately means no benefits, job-provided health insurance, sick or vacation leave, etc. This means that for every day we need off, we have to make up for that money elsewhere. I have seen many therapists (myself included) continue to work even with significant injuries or without days off because they can't afford the time off. This relates to the proposed increase in several ways:

1. Many of us do not make a significant yearly income due to the variable nature of our field
2. We already pay \$350+ biannually to complete our required continuing education courses and CPR, while making only a fraction of what other healthcare workers earn (who must meet similar requirements)
3. Most CE classes require LMTs to take time off of work, so we not only pay money to keep our licenses, but lose even more in wages to meet the requirements.

The proposal also compares the rates of nearby states to those proposed. There may not be a large difference at first glance, however the majority of those states have a higher minimum wage than PA. Although many of us negotiate our own prices via contracts, we are still bound by the earnings of potential clientele; by default we charge less (and take home less) because the people in our state earn less.

Although increasing our renewal fees will fix the board's deficit, I ask that the board considers the financial burden it will place on thousands of LMTs.

~ Jessica Burns