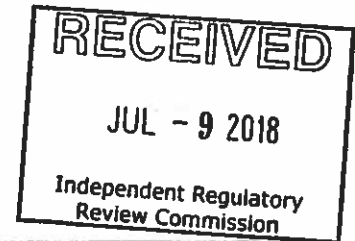


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**From:** Mary Fitzgerald  
**To:** ST. Regulatory Counsel  
**Subject:** Proposed Fee Increases for PA LMTs (referencing Regulation No. 16A-724 (fees))  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 3, 2018 12:21:50 PM



Ms. Wolfgang:

I would like to present the viewpoint of an established massage therapy practice in the state of PA with regards to the proposed fee increases, specifically the 167% increase in renewal fees. The massage industry, as that of almost all skilled trades, is currently experiencing a severe shortage of qualified, licensed candidates to work in the professional massage setting. As the owner of a small therapeutic massage office, I recently spent six months waiting for qualified applicants for an open position at my office. Many other establishments are having a similar problem. It is my belief that the increased fees may deter new therapists from pursuing a career in their chosen field, but more importantly may prevent some MT's (especially those only working part-time in the field) to make a decision not to continue to practice. The cost of a state-required education, along with the ever-increasing fees charged for required CE classes, may combine with these proposed increases to push many therapists beyond their financial capacities. This will decrease even further the number of qualified, experienced therapists available to work at establishments like mine.

I understand that there may be a deficit in the Board's budget at this time. And I've read the "explanation" given by the Board as to why these increases are necessary. Over-expenditures vs income obviously are out of balance. As a business owner, if I'm spending more than I'm bringing in, it's time to tighten my belt, not necessarily raise my fees. Has there been any explanation as to WHAT these excessive expenditures are? Or WHY they feel it's necessary to place almost the entire burden of balancing the budget on the backs of experienced, established therapists? I believe that a modest increase in the renewal fee along with judicious review of expenditures and elimination of red-tape procedures would be a better course of action than slamming all of us with this huge increase in fees. The cost of doing business in PA is getting prohibitive. This is just one example of how lack of planning and common sense on the State's part becomes the responsibility of the masses to repair.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards,

*Mary Fitzgerald, LMT*

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