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From: Melisann Jacobsen
To: ST. Regulatory Counsel
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First off let me say I understand everyone needs money to keep afloat but increasing higher fees on those who barely are getting by as is, will actually cause more therapists to walk away which will leave those increasing it to stay afloat needing more money because less are paying, so why not take other steps to achieve this. What I am getting at is massage therapists pay way more to keep their career than CNA's, Dental hygienists or other health care professionals. They make more money yet do not have all the expenses of continuing education. We work mostly on cash paying clients where the others have people who are covered by health insurance so they get a steady flow of clientele. If you worked to get massage covered by insurance carriers in the state we would have better pay and a steadier clientele as they do which would help increase peoples choice to become a massage therapist instead of upping the cost where most feel paying this much to keep the career isn't worth it. We have wear and tear on our own bodies and most places do not offer us health insurance so there is more out of our pocket not to mention we need liability coverage where nurses and dental assistance do not need liability they are covered and get health care. Taking steps to move massage up further in the health field would be a win for yourselves, the therapists and yes our clients too. Most medical fields have lobbyists fighting for them but massage does not. We stand in our own category of health and we need people to start working to increase its popularity so we too can all succeed at our goals. I on a very good week take home \$500 but I pay out over \$500 a year to continuing education, CPR, liability insurance, health insurance, hotels, gas, licensure etc. I went to college for this 18 months and a CNA can obtain a certification in less than 3 months yet makes more and doesnt have all the extra expenses. I can not support a family working full time doing massage but it is my passion. I have heard many left because we thought upon entering school we would make roughly \$32,000-48,000 I made \$12,000 my first year and about \$18,000 my second year. Could you raise a family on \$18,000 a year? Hopefully you all understand my point. It is very upsetting to many of us and I know so many who will not pay the \$200 and will cease to be a massage therapist if it goes into effect. Maybe this is the goal to keep raising the cost making it harder so the big pharmaceutical companies keep their heads higher than ever. I will never know but what I do know is we need people on our side fighting for us. Please do the right thing.

