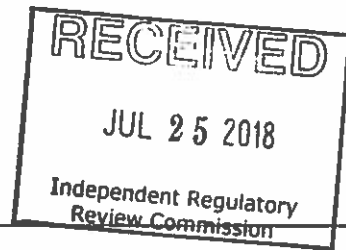


From: Lori Zipay  
To: ST. Regulatory Counsel  
Subject: Renewal letter  
Date: Saturday, July 21, 2018 4:19:38 PM

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PA State Massage Board Representative,

It has recently come to my attention that there is a proposed increase for the license renewal fee. While I understand the need for an increase in fees, the proposed increase is of concern for a few reasons.

First, a jump in cost from \$75 to \$200 is more than double the fee. Based on the average income and cost of continuing education, most therapists will not be able to maintain a license and this will force them to make a choice between choosing another career path and starting over, or putting their livelihood at risk by continuing to practice without a license. The board has already taken away a number of continuing education credits valuable to individuals in the field which has chased them out of the profession. It seems counterproductive for a board regulating massage, to potentially increase the number of therapists practicing without a license.

In comparison to other license renewal fees in the state of Pennsylvania, this would place Massage Therapy on the higher end. Renewal fees on the higher end would also place us in a category with fields that have a higher annual income. Since we are frequently lumped in with other occupations when discussing our scope of practice and where it crosses over, I figured I would include these fields for reference. Physical therapists make an average annual salary of \$86,850 but only pay a renewal fee of \$90 while Physical Therapist Assistants make roughly \$57,430 but only pay \$45 to renew their license. In contrast, the renewal fee for Chiropractors is \$210 with an annual income of \$68,640. This renewal fee is much closer to the proposed fee for Massage Therapists but Chiropractors require a doctorate to practice. This seems a bit skewed given the difference in scope of practice. Fees closer to our current fees include Registered Nurses at \$65, Estheticians at \$67, and Cosmetologists at \$67. While Registered Nurses make significantly more than Massage Therapists, Estheticians and Cosmetologists could be considered in the same bracket at \$30,080 and \$24,850 respectively. Given the educational requirements, I find it odd that Massage Therapists would be paying so much to renew a license.

As stated previously, I understand the need to increase fees as it is something that happens across the board but I feel there are better ways to go about it. If the proposed fee increase stands as is, it would not only be unfortunate but potentially damaging to the future of massage in Pennsylvania. If the board feels this is their only option, then maybe some support could be offered in the form of massage being more than just a pampering service. Currently, massage therapists are seen as people who do body scrubs and light swedish work. We are fighting to be seen as a legitimate, holistic service that adds to the client's daily life whether it be through receiving touch, relieving pain, or just general interaction with another human. Consider offering some backing for practicing massage therapists if we are required to pay \$200 to renew a license to provide our services.

Thank you for your time,

Lori Zipay, LMT