

Fran Ray
P.O. Box 1064
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March 16, 1012

Planning and Development Committee
Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Avenue, Room 2100
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: **HB5455** ***AN ACT CONCERNING PENALTIES FOR AND THE INVESTIGATION
OF THE OPERATION OF ILLEGAL MASSAGE ESTABLISHMENTS***
Language: Use of "Thai Yoga Massage," in lieu of "Thai Massage"

Dear Sir/Madam,

I see taking place in an increasing number of yoga studios in Fairfield County, whereby they are offering what really amounts to Thai Massage under the headings of *Thai Yoga Bodywork, Thai Yoga, and Thai Yoga Therapy*. These yoga studios are attaching the practice of Thai Massage to *Yoga*, calling it *Thai Yoga Bodywork, Thai Yoga, or Thai Yoga Therapy*, and creating a "backdoor" to bring in Thai Massage as an alternate revenue source, while circumventing the licensing requirements applicable to massage therapy. Even when reading their websites' descriptions of Thai Yoga, they themselves characterize Thai Yoga as massage.

To address this growing trend in yoga studios, I suggest the use of "*Thai Yoga Massage*" in lieu of "Thai Massage" in HB5455, to clarify "Thai Yoga" as massage.

I am a licensed massage therapist (CT Lic. #2446). I have specialized in Thai Massage since 1997. My practice is in lower Fairfield County. I am personally aware of 4 yoga studios in Fairfield County who currently offer Thai Yoga Massage by unlicensed persons. On their websites they use the various names; *Thai Yoga Bodywork, Thai Yoga* and *Thai Yoga Therapy*. They are:

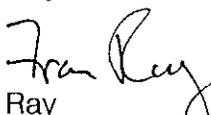
Blackbird Yoga, Georgetown, CT	Website: blackbirdyoga.com
Elements Yoga, Darien, CT	Website: www.elementsyoga.com
Yoga For Everybody, Fairfield, CT	Website: www.yoga4everybody.net
Kaia Yoga, Westport & Greenwich, CT	Website: kaia yoga.com

In December 2011, I filed complaints for several unlicensed persons practicing Thai Yoga Massage with the Connecticut Department of Public Health Practitioner Investigations Unit. They are currently being investigated.

Regardless of the name, the modality and training is the same. Thai Yoga Massage is an advanced massage modality that requires a high level of skill. It is a *deep massage* that includes rhythmic compression, kneading, stretching, and twisting of the body. A Thai Yoga massage therapist uses his/her thumbs, elbows, knees, and feet when he/she manipulates the Thai energy lines (sen) and stretches the body. Thai Yoga Massage is studied beyond the standard education needed to become a licensed massage therapist. A great deal of harm can be caused by unlicensed persons practicing Thai Yoga Massage on the public.

I thank you for your time. I believe it is imperative for public safety, that an employer be responsible and accountable to hire licensed massage therapists to perform all modalities of massage therapy.

Sincerely,


Fran Ray
CT Licensed Massage Therapist #2446