

Austin, Bob **HB 6243**

Last year HB5455 added several modalities to Massage Therapy statutes. It is understandable that people using some of these modalities would be upset at additional requirements being imposed, but the main purpose of all the Massage Therapy statutes is to provide safety to the public, both from practitioners who are not adequately trained and from the sex trafficking trade.

Up for consideration now is HB6243 which seeks to remove "Thai yoga" from the statutes. The first problem is that the individuals that operate sexually oriented businesses understand our law VERY well and if the term "Thai Yoga" is removed, we will begin to see such businesses begin to use the loophole that has been opened and use the term "Thai Yoga" in the next few years. The second problem with removing the term "Thai Yoga" is that yoga instructors will become "practitioners" and with as little as 30 hours of Thai Yoga training, plus their 200 hours of Yoga Teacher Training. We need to keep this loophole closed!!

The term "Thai Yoga" is used to describe "Thai massage" like the word "masseur", "masseur", "massagist", or "massage practitioner" is used to describe "massage therapist". They are perceived as interchangeable. Thai Yoga is Thai massage.

The most clear difference between "Thai Yoga" and "Yoga" is passive versus active movement from the participant.

- Thai Yoga is done on a mat with the recipient passive and the practitioner performing systematic and scientific manipulation and treatment of the soft tissues of the body, by use of pressure, friction, stroking, percussion, kneading, vibration, range of motion and nonspecific stretching.. It is done one on one, just like any other style of massage therapy (western or eastern styles).
- Yoga, no matter which style, is done actively by the participant or participants with guidance from the instructor over an entire classroom. Yoga requires an instructor, but Thai yoga requires a practitioner. What these instructors are doing is "assisted yoga" and it should be stated as such. It must not be called Thai Yoga.

Thai Yoga IS massage and HB6243 is not a good bill for the protection of the field of Massage Therapy, and for public safety.

RA

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No dream comes true until you wake up and go to work. - Anonymous



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