

Legislative Testimony for the Public Health Committee Hearing on Wednesday March, 18, 2015

Joint Committee on Public Health

Bill No. 6794

An Act Concerning the Department of Public Health's Recommendations Regarding Massage Therapist Qualifications

My name is Leah Gustafson and I am speaking here today to ensure the prompt implementation of the Department of Public Health's recommendations regarding qualifications for massage therapists. I received my massage therapy training in Iowa, where I graduated at the top of my class. I practiced at a chiropractic clinic where I specialized in prenatal massage and personal injury cases. When I first moved to Connecticut, I understood that in order to obtain my massage therapy license, I would have to retake a board examination. The only exam Connecticut accepted was the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork, or the NCBTMB. However, I had taken the Massage and Bodywork Licensing Examination, or the MBLEX, as it was the most widely accepted exam across all 50 states. Connecticut was the only state that required a license to practice, but did not accept scores from the MBLEX. When this bill goes into effect, the MBLEX will be the only board exam given and accepted in all 50 states, thus providing a standardization of the licensing process and facilitating licensure portability for therapists.

My credentials more than qualify me to practice massage therapy in the state of CT. I meet all of the educational requirements, I passed the MBLEX with high scores, and I held a license and practiced in a clinical setting for two years where I helped people on a daily basis overcome countless injuries and issues.

At this moment, the state is not yet accepting MBLEX scores, but the NCBTMB is no longer offering exams for state licensing. So I am left with zero options. I simply cannot practice in this state until this bill goes into full effect. For this reason, it is imperative that it does so as swiftly as possible so I can provide a valuable service to the public and go back to doing what I love.

Thank you,  
Leah Gustafson