

Good Afternoon. My name is David Madon and I am the President of the Maryland Chapter of the American Massage Therapy Association. I am here today to speak in favor of HB 1331, requiring that Health Insurance cover Massage Therapy. Last year we achieved removing language that barred massage therapy from being covered by insurance. This year, we hope to advance our health profession and mandate that insurance cover certain massage services.

According to the AMTA Consumer Survey from June 2023, here are some statistics:

- **67 percent** of individuals surveyed claim their primary reason for receiving a massage in the previous 12 months was medical or stress related.
- **88 percent** of consumers agree that massage therapy should be considered a form of health care.; And
- **95 percent** of individuals surveyed believe that massage can be effective in reducing pain; with **25 percent** of respondents stating they have used massage therapy for pain relief.

Our clients seek out massage for conditions including improving mental health, improved sleep, pain from conditions such as fibromyalgia and spinal stenosis, and to lower blood pressure, just to name a few. With the assistance of insurance, more clients can seek these services in conjunction with recommendations from their physicians, and possibly reduce the amount of medicine, such as opioids that they take.

Many can benefit from regular massages for their health, but can't afford out of pocket expenses. I strongly urge you to consider supporting HB 1331, so that we can continue to allow access to your constituents who suffer from a variety of medical conditions.