



Board of Massage Therapy Examiners

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Acting Secretary

Kristen Bodnarchuk, Chair – Sharon J. Oliver, Executive Director
4201 Patterson Avenue, Suite 301 Baltimore MD 21215 Phone: 410-764-4738

2023 SESSION POSITION PAPER

BILL NO: SB 216
COMMITTEE: Finance
POSITION: Support

TITLE: Massage Therapy – Definition and Reimbursement

BILL ANALYSIS: The main purpose of Senate Bill (SB) 216 is to update the definition of Massage Therapy and repeal a provision of law that does not require a nonprofit health insurance plan, an insurer, a health maintenance organization, or a person acting as a third party administrator to reimburse a licensed massage therapist or registered massage practitioner for any services rendered.

POSITION AND RATIONALE: The Maryland Board of Massage Therapy Examiners (the Board) supports SB 216.

The Board is seeking to remove a section from the statute that restricts licensed massage therapists from billing third parties for medically necessary services. No other health occupation board has this restrictive language. We are licensed healthcare providers as defined by the statute. Under other bills such as the House Bill (HB) 25 Public Health – Healthy Maryland Program – Establishment, the universal single-payer health bill, massage therapy is covered as a medical service.

Finally, in line with the removal of section **6-403** the Board is aiming to remove language from the definition of Massage Therapy which specifically precludes the “**treatment**” of illness, disease, or injury from the scope of practice. Massage therapy is currently ordered and accepted as part of a normal **treatment** plan(s) prescribed for patients by Physicians or other health authorities also covered under the health occupations article.

For all of these reasons, the Board of Massage Therapy Examiners respectfully requests a favorable vote on SB 216.

For more information, please contact Sharon J. Oliver, Executive Director at 410-764-5985 or Sharon.oliver@maryland.gov, or Lillian Reese, the legislative liaison for the boards at Lillian.Reese@maryland.gov or at [443-794-4757](tel:443-794-4757) or at lillian.reese@maryland.gov.

The opinion of the Board expressed in this document does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the Administration.