

## Testimony for SB 216

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 SB 216. This bill repeals the fact that insurance plans, HMOs or the like do not have to reimburse a licensed massage therapist or registered massage practitioner. Given the opportunity many adults have used or would use a complimentary holistic health approach. In fact, there are currently codes on the books for massage. However, most insurance plans only allow certain health care providers to use those ICD codes, including chiropractic care or physical therapist. Many hear the word massage and think of the luxury relaxation spa aspect. There are many health and medical reasons individuals may get a massage. Massage can provide relief to that person who has fibromyalgia or carpal tunnel syndrome. Massage can assist with depression and anxiety and maybe reduce the number of times that person has a panic attack. Or on a personal note – massage led to my speedy recovery when I had back surgery. I took pain meds for a week or less. I was up and walking without a walker within 2. In addition, we all realize that we have a major opioid crisis on our hands. I am a firm believer that massage will assist in the reduction of the number of opioids used. Would you rather allow someone to continuously be in pain or assist them by taking a holistic approach? By allowing massage therapists the opportunity to bill insurance carriers it will greatly help our citizens of Maryland who might not have the luxury of spending money on receiving a massage. So, in conclusion I ask that you vote in favor of SB 216. Thank you!