

Tarnya Constantino
Sumner
LD 409

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and Members of the Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services Committee,

My name is Tarnya Constantino. I have been a licensed massage therapist in Maine for over 23 years, working in South Portland and Norway. I strongly oppose LD 409, which would enroll Maine in the Massage Interstate Compact. While increasing mobility for licensed professionals is a worthy goal, this compact presents significant issues that make it unsuitable for Maine at this time.

1. Many Maine Massage Therapists Would Not Qualify

The compact imposes education requirements that nearly half of U.S. states, including Maine, do not meet. This means many Maine massage therapists would be excluded from participation unless they complete additional requirements. It creates an uneven playing field that undermines the compact's effectiveness. The compact does not account for the diverse education pathways that many massage therapist have undertaken leaving them out due to differences in state mandates.

2. No Grandfathering for Experienced Therapists

The compact does not allow experienced, law-abiding therapists to be grandfathered in. Instead, they would be required to take an entry-level exam that did not exist before 2005. It is unfair to disregard years of experience and impose unnecessary testing on long-standing professionals.

3. Financial and Transparency Concerns with FSMTB

The Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards (FSMTB), which owns the MBLEx exam and required database, stands to profit from this compact. There is little transparency in how decisions are made, raising concerns that this initiative benefits FSMTB financially rather than supporting the the genuine interest of licensed massage therapist, educators and regulatory bodies.

4. Maine's Licensing Framework Conflicts with the Compact

Maine does not require an exam for licensure, and the state does not maintain exam records. Forcing compliance with the compact's exam-based system would create administrative burdens and financial costs, impacting both practitioners and the state. For these reasons, I urge you to reject LD 409. Rather than joining a flawed compact, Maine should focus on strengthening its own licensing standards while advocating for reforms that truly support massage therapists and their clients.

Thank you for your time and consideration.