



November 2, 2015

**RE: OSMA Support for Massage Therapy Licensure**

- WOODY G. JENKINS, MD  
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Dear Senator:

On behalf of the Oklahoma State Medical Association and our more than 4,000+ physician and medical student members, I am writing to urge our support for the regulation and licensure of massage therapists.

Licensure of massage therapists will undoubtedly provide public health benefits, making sure that practitioners have adequate training and meet minimum safety and sanitation requirements. But there is also a darker, more serious matter that this proposal will help address.

With its central location and proximity to three major interstates, Oklahoma has unfortunately become a hotbed for human trafficking and the sex trade. While many massage therapy businesses are acting properly and providing a service their clients desire, many more are acting as fronts for the sex trade. This proposal will allow the public to have confidence in the reputable businesses while hopefully shutting down the illegitimate ones that prey on their victims.

While at first blush it may not appear that the issues of sex trafficking and massage therapy would be linked, law enforcement tells us over and over that many massage parlors are fronts for the sex industry. Your support for this measure will help protect the health of clients at legitimate massage parlors and help shut down a dark side of this industry that has forced so many into sexual slavery.

Oklahoma is currently just one of five states that do not regulate the massage industry. It is time to change that.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Woody Jenkins, MD  
President, Oklahoma State Medical Association

WGJ/wdg