

Hello Senators, Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. I am here to tell you that I am in favor of the bill SB 19-089 and ask for your support.

My name is Sheryl Daniel. I am a Colorado licensed massage therapist of 24 years, a massage and esthetician school owner for 10 years, and have been involved in massage education for 22 years. I live and conduct my business in beautiful Fort Collins, CO.

I am asking for your support of this bill because it addresses clarifying the language in the exemption portion of the Colorado revised statutes addressing occupational continuing education.

The exemption rule contains a list of entities that are exempted from being a school in order to legally teach occupational continuing education courses in Colorado to already licensed professionals so they may maintain their membership in these professional organizations. I want to point out and emphasize we are not talking about certificates and diplomas or programs of study, like massage therapy basic training. We are only interested in continuing education, usually offered in a weekend training.

The language of the current rule for exemption states "courses approved by bona fide professional or trade associations teaching courses primarily to the association members".

What we are asking for will simply allow courses that already meet the exemption to be taught by instructors that have been approved by those organizations, and are not employed by them, as DPOS requires. The bill does not create a new exemption, it only clears up the language to include instructors of approved courses. We need this clarification, in Colorado if you are a member of the National Certification Board for Massage you have a very limited offering of courses to take to maintain your membership. The bill in no way changes, lessens, or inhibits DPOS oversight of Private Occupational Schools. As a school owner myself, I am still regulated by DPOS for all my programs. This bill will not create any new or undue financial risk to the consumer in the way that high cost tuition does for an occupational school program.

The National Massage Board, the oldest massage organization, has pioneered standards of education and therapist testing for consumer safety and professional congruency, they literally set the standard for massage training. They enforce a meticulous approval process for instructors. They have disciplinary actions in place in the cases of ethics violations as they relate to student complaints and periodic audits. The approval process for instructors is thorough, requires a monetary fee, a renewal process, and attracts only the most professional instructors and practitioners. If you defraud a student you will lose your ability to teach to their members. Only approved teachers may allow members to receive the needed CEU credit required for continued membership.

As a small locally owned school, it is too costly to add one class, \$500 in Colorado, and many other costly provisions that may make sense for a school certificate program, but not for a day or a weekend continuing education course. Many well known and respected advanced instructors do not come or teach in Colorado because of these prohibitive regulations and we need them too.

There has been discussion of a loss of revenue because of this bill. In the case of massage therapy, these courses are not being taught because of the cost to do so here. In some states it only cost \$400. to create a school, less than adding one course here in CO. Many amazing Colorado instructors are forced to travel to other states to teach continuing education. This impacts local Colorado massage therapy con ed instructors and businesses tremendously. Colorado loses revenue because of this.

With the addition of approved instructors to the language of the regulation, opportunity for instructors and courses will bring a higher caliber of courses, attract more destination continuing education course offerings, and of course business revenue to Colorado. It will create a thriving and diverse therapist base that values delivering a quality product to Colorado consumers.

Please vote in support of SB 19-089

Thank you again for your time and thoughtful consideration of this matter.

"Professional Organization Exemption" rule. (sited in the notes (CRS 23-64-104(1)(h)).