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Mr. Chair and members of the committee:

My name is John Tresise and I am a massage therapist licensed in Reno and Sparks. I am representing myself and I am not in favor of this bill. Please let me thank you in advance for allowing me to present this testimony to the committee. At 57 years of age and after 20 years with Washoe Medical Center managing their Laundry Linen & Environmental Services Department, I took a huge risk by leaving that organization and enrolling as a student at the Ralston School of Massage. I made this choice, because I wanted to become more closely related to direct patient care and I had a vision of bringing the dynamic of touch back into healthcare and the healing process. Since that time, I have worked at building a massage practice around working with patients in various stages of recovery and/or not, providing massage to caregivers, who, by the way, tend to take care of everyone but themselves and giving back to the school that provided me with the essential tools I needed to be a competent massage practitioner. I am currently realizing my dream by working with Washoe Medical Center, The Circle of Life Hospice, The Promenade on the River and the Ralston School of Massage.

Although I am not necessarily opposed to State Licensure for massage therapists, I cannot currently support SB 338. I am not convinced that state licensure for other than consolidating the process, is really necessary or that reasons offered in the past are valid. First, I don't agree that the main premise for this legislation, i.e. to protect the health, welfare, and safety of the citizenry is valid. If there was significant harm being caused by locally licensed massage therapists in Nevada, or elsewhere for that matter, our liability insurance would be considerably more than \$200 a year. Second, confusing massage with prostitution has to do with archaic images and/or the way brothels or prostitutes, legal or not, advertise in this state. Notice the number of brothels listed under "Massage, Therapeutic" in the yellow pages of our telephone books. Third, being licensed by the state will not deter therapists from being propositioned by their clients. Only we, as individual therapists can stop this by dynamic by making it clear that such behavior will not be tolerated. And lastly, a professional image can only be built by individual practitioners being professional as we do our work.

When considering legislation for state licensure, there are three screens I use for evaluating it:

- 1. Is this provision/section intended to be exclusionary or could it be used to limit the number of, or discourage folks from entering into the massage profession?** In the past, proposed state legislation has been written by people who, I believe, live their lives out of an image of scarcity. They worry that every new licensed massage therapist will cut into their business base. Unfortunately, this motive is mirrored by many local massage boards also. Their licensing procedures are unnecessarily confusing, time consuming and intimidating thus creating a framework for bureaucratic birth control. I have always tried to work from a stance of abundance. I welcome, encourage, and actively mentor anyone who would choose to go into this profession because I believe that the more qualified practitioners we have out there touching people in a professional and therapeutic manner, the more quickly massage will gain credibility in the eyes of the public and become an accepted complimentary healthcare modality.
- 2. How will this provision impact the financial burden to the average massage practitioner and will equal benefit be received by the massage community?** What are they benefits to the profession as a whole and do these benefits justify the additional costs.
- 3. Will this provision/section significantly delay the transition from massage student to practicing massage therapist?** Although I began the local licensing procedure a 60 days before I completed my class work, it took a full 6 months from the original application submission date to get my license. Fortunately, I had a financial base that allowed me to do this without much problem. But I know many individuals for whom this has caused a real financial burden and/or delayed their entry into the profession.

SB 338 currently fails these screens for reasons I included in the e-mail I sent each of you and for these reason's I cannot support this legislation. I have included a copy of the text of that e-mail. It is part of an e-mail I have been asked to read into the record by Ann Chellman, Legislative Services Coordinator for the Associated Bodywork and Massage Professionals. ABMP is a professional membership association representing more than 40,000 massage, bodywork and somatic therapies practitioners. It currently lists 558 members in Nevada.

(Read E-Mail Statement from Ann Chellman)

Thank you again fro the opportunity to present this testimony and I would be happy to answer any questions you or the committee may have for me.

John C. Tresise

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