

Dear Honorable Chairperson and Committee Members,

My name is Ronald Garffie and I am a licensed massage therapist by the city of Lenexa, KS. My wife and I own a Massage Envy clinic in Lenexa, which is one of the nine Massage Envy franchised clinics found in Wichita, Lawrence and the Johnson County areas. Massage Envy employees approximately 180 massage therapists in the state of Kansas.

We support **HOUSE BILL No. 2564**. We believe that it will help legitimize massage therapy and hold therapists accountable to their profession. It will also restrict and discourage practitioners from promoting or implying “other” illegal and illicit services under the guise of “massage,” similar to these CraigsList ads that are on the web this week.

We respectfully request that you consider two things when drafting the full bill:

1. Please add a provisional licensing section to the bill. The provisional licensing gives graduating students the opportunity to work and earn money for 6- to 12-months while they are studying for the National Exams. We work closely with Massage Envy’s in Missouri and Nebraska, in which both states have a provisional licensing option. The Massage Envy clinics in those states believe that it is critical to keeping graduating students in the field and current with their hands-on practice.

National Exams are expensive and difficult, taking graduates months of preparation and savings for the test. If a graduate is forced to take a random job at a QuikTrip for example to live in on while studying and saving, then they are not continuing to hone their skills with their hands-on techniques. We respectfully ask that you add provisional licensing to the bill so that these graduates can work in the field of massage, while they are preparing for their exams.

2. Continuing Education Units (CEU) – We believe that CEU credits are a valid way to keep skills and knowledge current. We request that CEUs be accepted from both accredited establishments like massage schools, colleges and universities, but also from accredited online sources. With the diverse, spread out population in Kansas, it is not always possible for a massage therapist to take time off to go to an establishment to take CEU credits. There are several great resources that provide online classes for massage therapists. We respectfully ask that you require a minimum amount of CEUs and to consider or have the board approve all relevant courses that could be taken by Massage Therapists.