



# Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards

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## **RESPONSE TO STAKEHOLDERS**

(Overland Park, Kan. – July 10) – In recent days, following the executive level changes at the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCBTMB), the FSMTB has been inundated with communications asking that the FSMTB take a firm stand offering stability and guidance to the profession.

The FSMTB shares the concerns of many stakeholders about a seemingly fragile infrastructure of the primary certification body for the massage and bodywork profession. However, we wish to reiterate that policies, actions and conduct of NCBTMB, or any private certification body are not under the control of licensing boards and agencies.

The Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards was established to serve and support state massage licensing boards and agencies in their mission of public protection. This type of organization, although new to the massage & bodywork profession, has been effectively and responsibly serving other health professions for years – specifically, the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy, and the Association of Social Work Boards.

The FSMTB is working toward the reciprocity enjoyed by those professions. By having one licensing exam the states can assist in the process of portability of licensure for massage therapists. As requested from the states, the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx) was created from a job task analysis survey of more than 7,500 professionals in massage, bodywork and somatic practices. This exam was launched in 2007 following the largest and most comprehensive job task analysis survey ever conducted in this profession. With the MBLEx now in place, it is no longer necessary for state regulatory boards to be at the mercy of, or beholden to any party that can dictate or jeopardize the regulatory boards' function, decision making or integrity.

The Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards does not wish to compete with NCBTMB over its certification exams or to engage in a “turf battle” as some observers have described recent events. The FSMTB maintains the factually-based position that licensure is the function of the licensing boards – not the function of certification boards.

The Federation’s hope is that the NCBTMB will recognize that the profession has evolved and that NCBTMB’s true purpose in the industry is with certification. We encourage NCBTMB to fully support the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards, the regulatory process, and the benefits of a single licensing exam owned, operated and designed specifically to meet the needs of the regulatory community in their role of public protection.

With FSMTB’s commitment to transparency and integrity blended with the qualities of compassion, patience, wisdom, truth, and kindness, we believe that so much more can be accomplished by and for this profession. We wish to progress with these guiding principles as our foundation and to lead by example. If you have interest in the direction of the regulatory community please contact your state massage therapy board, members of your state licensing board, or the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards.

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