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CCMT to Proceed with Process Regarding State Licensing for Massage Therapy

DENVER—October 24, 2007—Colorado is only one of 11 states in the United States that does not currently require massage therapists to be licensed in order to practice. In 1991, the Colorado Coalition of Massage Therapists (CCMT) was formed to work with government officials in drafting an equitable, enforceable, and inclusive regulation, which protects the name, the profession, and the public, with the ultimate goal of state licensure. The Colorado Chapter of the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA) is a member of CCMT.

State licensing would mean one license and one set of rules and regulations to be followed and enforced. The goal is a reasonable law that protects the consumer from unsavory or unqualified individuals and is fair and inclusive to the profession. Currently, several local governments throughout the state have a variety of ordinances that can be confusing, complicated and expensive, especially if a massage therapist operates in several different cities.

More importantly, in the majority of municipalities, there is no regulation regarding the practice of massage therapy, thus allowing anyone to provide massage therapy services, whether they have been properly trained or not. Many of the proponents of regulation take great pride in their training, membership in professional associations, and the fact that they have taken nationally recognized competency examinations.

To that end, in 2006, CCMT completed a Sunrise Review Application process through the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA). Colorado law requires that individuals or groups proposing legislation to regulate any occupation or profession first submit information to DORA for the purposes of a Sunrise Review (Colorado Revised Statute 24-34-104.1). On October 15, 2007, DORA completed its evaluation and review of the application and the profession.

“Unfortunately, DORA did not recommend regulating massage therapists,” stated Kathryn Stewart, AMTA-CO Government Relations Chair. “While we are very disappointed with the DORA report, we are firmly committed to proceeding with our efforts toward standardized licensing and will be approaching the Colorado General Assembly at its next session in January.”

As part of the review process, DORA surveyed over 4,000 massage therapists throughout Colorado. Seventy-eight percent of the respondents support regulation. Proponents maintain that the unregulated practice of massage therapy endangers the public health, safety and welfare; perpetuates the misperceptions regarding legitimate massage therapy and illicit activities; and due to the variety of local regulations, is difficult for legitimate massage therapists to practice.

Throughout the summer, CCMT held informational meetings throughout Colorado. These meetings were of particular interest to massage therapists and health care providers to aid them in gathering information about licensing and the coalition's efforts.

For more information, contact Kathryn Stewart, AMTA-CO Government Relations Chair at 303-425-7298 or vimarsha@aol.com.

For more information on CCMT, visit www.ccmbt.org.

About AMTA

The Colorado Chapter of the American Massage Therapy Association has more than 1,300 members throughout Colorado. The chapter is dedicated to furthering the professionalism of the massage therapy field and educating consumers on the benefits and use of massage in maintaining active and healthy lifestyles.

The American Massage Therapy Association is a non-profit, professional association with more than 56,000 members throughout the United States and in some 27 other countries. The Association is directed by volunteer leadership chosen through its national election and fosters ongoing, direct-member-involvement through its 51 chapters.

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