



FSMTB®

FEDERATION OF STATE
MASSAGE THERAPY BOARDS

Annual Report

October 2023



Message *from the* President



As state regulators and guardians of the public interest, we are entrusted with the responsibility to shape and uphold laws that impact a profession and the citizens we serve. In our pursuit of good governance, it is essential that we engage in open and honest communication, forging connections across our jurisdictions and transcending boundaries for the greater good.

Through robust communication, we enhance our ability to respond effectively to the challenges of our time. We can tackle the urgent issues of human trafficking, deregulation, and license portability with unwavering determination and unity. It is through communication that we can navigate the complexities of our regulatory landscape. Let us commit ourselves to actively seek out opportunities for dialogue, collaboration, and knowledge exchange.

Let us cultivate an atmosphere of trust and respect, where all voices are heard and valued. Together, we can build a future where the collective wisdom of our state regulators drives positive change.

Craig Knowles, LMT
President

2023 FSMTB Board of Directors

PRESIDENT
Craig Knowles
*Chair, Georgia Board of
Massage Therapy*

VICE PRESIDENT
Sandy Anderson
*Executive Director, Nevada
Board of Massage
Therapists*

TREASURER
Keith Warren
*Executive Director, Alabama
Board of Massage Therapy*

Robin Alexander
Indiana

Foad Araiinejad
*Alabama Board of
Massage Therapy*

Mike Arismendez
*Executive Director,
Texas Department of
Licensing and Regulation*

Victoria Drago
*Florida Board of
Massage Therapy*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Debra Persinger, PhD, CAE



Mission



The mission of FSMTB is to support its Member Boards in their work to ensure that the practice of massage therapy is provided to the public safely and competently.

Non-Profit



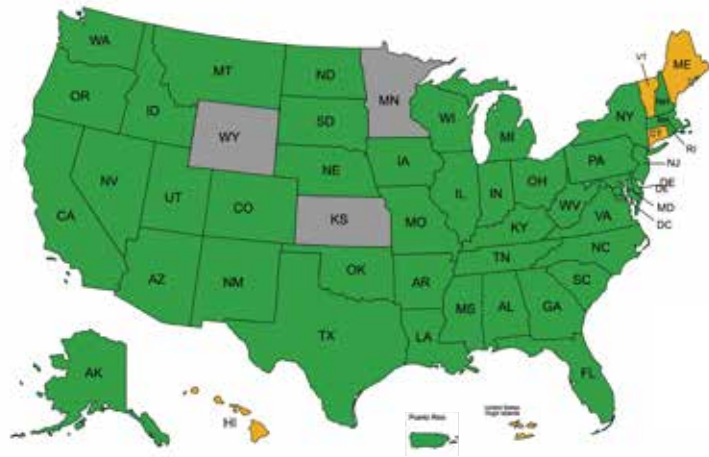
The FSMTB is a 501c3, non-profit organization. All revenue is used to enhance FSMTB programs and services and provide support to its Members in fulfilling their responsibility of protecting the public from unsafe practice.

Membership

The FSMTB members are state boards and agencies that regulate the profession of massage therapy and are charged with the mission of public protection.

FSMTB Membership by State

- Not Regulated
- FSMTB Members
- Non-Members

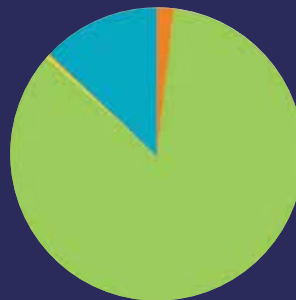


2023 Financials*

July 2022 - June 2023

* *unaudited*

INCOME



INCOME	
Membership	115,700
Exam Services	5,436,400
Professional Services	21,335
Grants/Donations	5,000
Investments	827,100
TOTAL	6,405,535

EXPENSES



EXPENSES	
General Operating	2,306,350
Travel & Events	515,385
Professional Fees	496,900
Exam Services	1,451,370
TOTAL	4,770,005
Surplus	1,635,530



School Outreach

In addition to campus visits and virtual school events, FSMTB attended national school events, including the Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals (ABMP) School Forum, American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA) School Summit, AMTA national convention, and Florida State Massage Therapy Association (FSMTA) Convention.

EVC



The Education Verification Center (EVC) supports more than

1,500 EVC users representing over **1,000 state-approved massage therapy schools.**

Communications

FSMTB responds to over 5,000 phone calls and emails each month.

WEBSITE

The FSMTB website, fsmtb.org, remains the foremost resource for individuals seeking information about FSMTB and the MBLEx. During the past year, the website hosted over 504,000 page views.

34,260 Calls

29,332 Emails

98,862 Home Web Page Visits

307,251 MBLEx Web Page Visits

12,353 Member/Regulatory Boards Web Page Visits

2,333 Translated Content

SOCIAL MEDIA

FSMTB shares organizational news and regulatory information via its social media presence. Across all platforms, we had 7,000 followers, which was 20.4% lower than the previous year.



facebook.com/FSMTB



twitter.com/fsmtb



linkedin.com/fsmtb



[youtube.com The FSMTB](https://youtube.com/TheFSMTB)

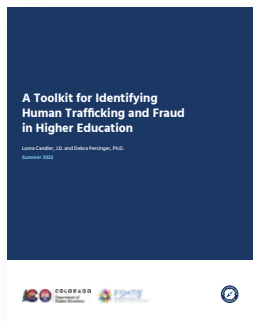


instagram.com/thefsmtb



Collaboration

HIGHER EDUCATION STATE AUTHORIZERS



The FSMTB received a grant from the Seldin/Haring-Smith Foundation to produce a Toolkit for Identifying Human Trafficking and Fraud in Higher Education. The resource, co-authored by our executive director, Dr. Debra with Lorna Candler of the Colorado Department of Higher Education, is a practical guide for state authorizers to identify and take action on human trafficking in higher education institutions. This guide continues to serve as a resource for education and training in the regulatory compliance and enforcement community.



GEORGIA HUMAN TRAFFICKING SUMMIT

FSMTB hosted an educational summit for local and state law enforcement agency personnel in Atlanta, Georgia.

THE NETWORK

THE NETWORK

The Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards partnered with The Network, a counter-human trafficking organization, to coauthor an article examining massage licensing fraud in education.

MASSAGE THERAPY COALITION

President Craig Knowles and Executive Director Dr. Debra Persinger represented FSMTB at the annual meeting of the coalition of national massage therapy organizations.



FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT

FSMTB provided an educational training session for federal law enforcement representatives regarding illicit massage.





MBLEx

The Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx) is an entry level competence exam that is psychometrically fair, valid, reliable and legally defensible.

FSMTB continues to work with massage regulatory boards and law enforcement agencies who collaborate to protect the integrity of the exam and in turn, the licensure process.



● STATES & TERRITORIES THAT USE MBLEX
 ● NOT REGULATED
 ● STATES THAT DO NOT USE ANY EXAM
 ● STATES THAT DO NOT USE MBLEX

MBLEx TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

The FSMTB complies with federal laws regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act and considers requests from qualified candidates with diagnosed disabilities to utilize testing accommodations when taking the MBLEx.

The nature of the disabilities for which the accommodations were provided included ADHD, learning disabilities, dyslexia, visual/hearing impairments, and mental health conditions. The costs for providing the testing accommodations are covered by FSMTB.

MBLEx Pass Rates*



17,400 MBLEx candidates tested
 First-time pass rate **72%**.

**July 2022 - June 2023*

MBLEx Accommodations



FSMTB supported **307** MBLEx candidates with **579** testing accommodations



MBLEx CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

The most current edition of the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination Candidate Handbook was published in July 2023. It is available on our website at fsmtb.org.

The MBLEx Candidate Handbook is an important reference for applicants and educational institutions. It contains comprehensive details about eligibility criteria, application processes, fees, scheduling, FSMTB candidate support, study materials, and examination content. In addition, it encompasses all the policies pertaining to exam administration, irregularities, and ensuring examination confidentiality.

MBLEx PREP MATERIALS

The Federation is committed to empowering MBLEx candidates in their exam preparation by offering a comprehensive array of study tools. The Federation strives to provide resources that enable aspiring massage and bodywork professionals to approach the MBLEx confidently.

THE MBLEx CHECK ONLINE READINESS ASSESSMENT

The MBLEx Check Online Readiness Assessment is the practice test designed to simulate the actual MBLEx experience. The Federation is proud to offer the MBLEx Check in Spanish, catering to our colleagues in Puerto Rico and Spanish-speaking communities nationwide.

THE OFFICIAL MBLEx STUDY GUIDE

The Official MBLEx Study Guide includes a comprehensive breakdown of the examination's core content areas and invaluable tips to encourage a successful examination experience. Notably, this guide offers a 100-question practice examination and includes sample exam items, further enhancing the learning experience.

The Official MBLEx Study Guide is available in English and Spanish.





REACH



94% of users who took a REACH course were happy with the course content and

89% would recommend REACH courses to other users



REGULATORY EDUCATION AND COMPETENCE HUB (REACH)

FSMTB offers online CE courses sponsored by state boards through the Regulatory Education and Competence Hub (REACH) at www.reach4ce.org.

Course completion information is recorded in the Massage Therapy Licensing Database (MTLD) for participating state boards to access.

CE REGISTRY

CE Registry is a registry of educators, providing massage and bodywork therapy continuing education, who meet and adhere to the national CE standards developed by the FSMTB regulatory community. The CE Registry accepts information from continuing education providers, including course completion information, and transfers that information into the national Massage Therapy Licensing Database (MTLD). CE Registry includes a Course Search capability that allows potential CE consumers (LMT's) to search for courses that meet their needs.

CE Registry is a solution that meets the needs of the regulatory community by:

- 1.** *Verifying primary source documentation of completed CE in MTLD.*

- 2.** *Supporting the authority of state regulatory boards to accept CE for license renewal.*

- 3.** *Reducing the instances of CE fraud among licensees.*

- 4.** *Protecting the licensees from predatory practices by CE providers.*

- 5.** *Identifying and making transparent the providers who are not compliant with the Standards established by the FSMTB membership.*



The following states accept CE Registry courses

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| Alabama | Nevada |
| Alaska | New Hampshire |
| Arkansas | New Jersey |
| Connecticut | New Mexico |
| Delaware | North Carolina |
| District of Columbia | Oklahoma |
| Idaho | Oregon |
| Indiana | Rhode Island |
| Iowa | South Carolina |
| Kentucky | South Dakota |
| Maryland | Tennessee |
| Michigan | Virginia |
| Missouri | Washington |
| Montana | West Virginia |
| Nebraska | Wisconsin |

CE Registry



383 courses registered to date
85% positive course feedback

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

This year the Government Relations team was active, primarily providing support and education to members and their jurisdictions' legislators on the Interstate Massage Compact (IMpact).

INTERSTATE MASSAGE COMPACT (IMPACT)

Massage therapy regulators, practitioners, and educators, in collaboration with FSMTB and the Council of State Governments (CSG), have developed the interstate massage therapy licensure compact, or IMpact.

IMpact enables licensed massage therapists to practice in all states that join the compact, rather than get an individual license in each state where they want to practice.

After seven (7) states adopt the legislation, IMpact is activated and the Compact Commission will begin accepting applications for the massage therapy multistate license.

SERVICE



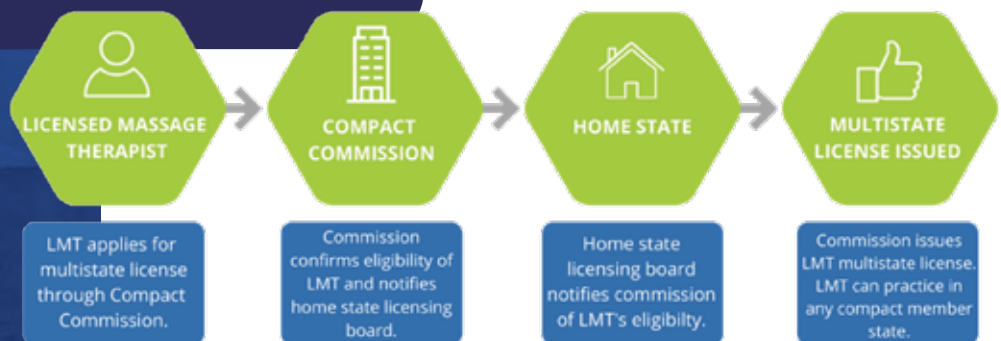
Attended over **100** board meetings, spending over **300** hours being directly available to our members.

Attended **50** legislative and committee hearings and submitted testimony on **18** occasions to **12** states.

Impact



Nevada was the **FIRST** state to adopt IMpact.



BILLS



A total of **198** bills were tracked, **42** of which were enacted.

LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

The most common type of legislation tracked related to the Interstate Massage Compact, massage boards, human trafficking, establishment regulation, license application and discipline, and scope of practice related to reflexology.



VIRTUAL MEMBERSHIP EVENTS

The Virtual Membership Events support the mission of the FSMTB by facilitating communication among member boards and providing education and guidance on trending issues such as licensure mobility, uniform minimum competency standards and interagency collaboration. Topics addressed in 2023 included the Interstate Massage Compact, the value of the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination, how to educate massage clients on boundaries, and collaborating with state education entities.

These events present an opportunity for members to discuss issues across jurisdictions and learn from one another. They continue to receive positive feedback and attendees consistently encourage others to attend.

MESSAGE BOARD EXECUTIVE SUMMIT

The Message Board Executive (MBE) Summit was held in Denver, Colorado on April 27-28, 2023. The 2023 Summit offered two tracks, one for Board Executives and one for Inspectors and Investigators.

The Summit focused on facilitating communication and sharing best practices across jurisdictions. Session content addressed how race, gender and policies contribute to the illicit massage industry; organized crime and protecting exam content; understanding trauma, secondary trauma, and burnout; regulatory trends; investigator training models; and massage establishment regulation. The feedback received from attendees was very positive.

LEGAL

The FSMTB initiated litigation in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas against Footy Rooty Development, Inc. D/B/A Footy Rooty Institute Houston, its officers, and other participating parties.

The litigation process, currently ongoing, was initiated by FSMTB, alleging copyright and trade secret infringement related to the intellectual property interests of the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx®).

MBE Summit



46 attendees representing
25 member jurisdictions.



VOLUNTEERS

We are grateful for our volunteers who juggle work schedules, family schedules, and everyday life obligations while still finding time to dedicate to volunteering for FSMTB.

We owe a special debt of gratitude to examination item writers for their unwavering service and dedication. Their diligent efforts and invaluable contributions significantly elevate the massage and bodywork profession for the benefit of all.

Contributions



6,237 volunteer hours
contributed to FSMTB

\$198,337 of volunteer
time donated

Thank
you



People

CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Katherine Brady, TX
Pattie Campbell, VA
Melissa Clark, OH
William Ensminger, PA
Ceena Lund, KS
Susan Salvo, LA
Elan Schacter, NC
Christina Valente, OH
Roberta Wolff, TX
Dr. Diane Young, FL

CE REGISTRY

Nicole Davis, NJ
William Ensminger, PA
Joseph Frazier, MA
Rosendo Galvez, IL
Barbara Lis, IN
Ceena Lund, KS
Dr. Tim Reischman, NC
Charlene Russell, MS
Elan Schacter, NC
Jan Shaw, SC
Bianca Smith, NV
Richard Ventura, MO

EXAMINATION DEVELOPMENT

Sarah Albanawi, VA
Karen Armstrong, MI
Su Bibik, MI
Ed Bolden-Greer, TN
Jeryd Bolden-Greer, TN
Katherine Brady, TX
Vickie Branch, NH
Laurie Craig, GA
Nicole Davis, NJ
Chimere Figaire-Correa, WA
Priscilla Fleming, NC
Sandy Fritz, MI
Rosendo Galvez, IL
Bethany Lowrie, PA
Ceena Lund, KS
Wendy McGinley, ND
Jodi Peck, AZ
Dr. Tim Reischman, NC
Charlene Russell, MS
Susan Salvo, LA
Elan Schacter, NC
Cherie Sohnen-Moe, AZ
Juntan (JT) Song, AZ
Tracy Sullivan, CT
Christina Valente, MO
Richard Ventura, MO
Charles Watson, KY
Roberta Wolff, TX

EXAMINATION ELIGIBILITY

Chair: Ed Bolden-Greer, TN
Chimere Figaire-Correa, WA
Karen Frazier, KY
Caroline Fox-Guerin, TX
Linda Lyter, WV
Sharon Oliver, MD
Charlene Russell, MS
Maile Tau'a-Roberts, UT
Heidi Williams, WA

FINANCE

Chair: Treasurer, Keith
Warren, AL
Elisabeth Barnard, NV
Caroline Fox-Guerin, TX
Elizabeth Kirk, NC
Linda Lyter, WV

EXAMINATION POLICY

Chair: Caroline Fox-Guerin, TX
Elisabeth Barnard, NV
Ed Bolden-Greer, TN
Chimere Figaire-Correa, WA
Karen Frazier, KY
Linda Lyter, WV
Charlene Russell, MS

POLICY

Chair: Victoria Drago, FL
Chimere Figaire-Correa, WA
Charisma Townsend-Davila, WI
Kay Warren, NC

NOMINATING

Chair: Charlene Russell, MS
Carrie Anderson, ND
Karen Armstrong, MI
David Cox, MD

ESTABLISHMENT TASK FORCE

Chair: Adrienne Price, GA
Karen Armstrong, MI
Ed Bolden-Greer, TN
Mike James, AL
Rick McElroy, CA
Charlene Russell, MS
Jeff Van Laanen, OR

LICENSE RENEWAL

Chair: Jan Shaw, SC
Lori Cutchin, OK
Karen Frazier, KY
Elizabeth Kirk, NC
Sharon Oliver, MD
Bianca Smith, NV
Maile Tau'a-Roberts, UT
Charisma Townsend-Davila, WI

ANNUAL MEETING PRESENTERS

Robert Beiser, *Strategic Initiatives Director, Polaris*
Michael Fogel, *PsyD, ABPP, Founder, Redirect*
Doug Gilmer, *PhD, Resident Agent in Charge, Homeland Security Investigations*
Matthew Shafer, *Deputy Policy Director, National Center for Interstate Compacts, The Council of State Governments*
Chris Smith, *Trauma Touch Therapist, Director of Colorado School of Healing Arts*

MESSAGE BOARD EXECUTIVE SUMMIT PRESENTERS

Theresa Brown, *South Carolina Board of Massage/Bodywork Therapy*
Christine Brunner, *Nevada State Board of Massage Therapists*
Kathy Chen, *Senior Program Advisor, The Network*
Pam Hamilton, *MSW, LCSW, Hamilton Counseling & Consulting*
Elizabeth Kirk, *North Carolina Board of Massage and Bodywork Therapy*
Janelle Larson, *Iowa Board of Massage Therapy*
Mike Longmire, *North Carolina Board of Massage and Bodywork Therapy*
Rick McElroy, *California Massage Therapy Council*
Robert Ruark, *Oregon Board of Massage Therapists*
Harry Samit, *Director, Special Investigations, Pearson VUE*
Jason Shawver, *Enforcement Investigator, State Medical Board of Ohio*
Dennis Trammel, *Alabama Board of Massage Therapy*
Jeff Van Laanen, *Oregon Board of Massage Therapists*
Keith Warren, *Alabama Board of Massage Therapy*
Mary Winston, *Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation*

VIRTUAL MEMBER EVENTS PRESENTERS

Dale J. Atkinson, *Esq., The Atkinson Firm, General Counsel to the FSMTB*
Matt Shafer, *Deputy Policy Director, National Center for Interstate Compacts, The Council of State Governments*
Jessica Thomas, *Policy Associate, Council of State Governments*
Craig Knowles, *FSMTB President, Chair, Georgia Board of Massage Therapy*
Harry Samit, *Director, Special Investigations, Pearson VUE*
Sandy Anderson, *LMT, FSMTB Vice President and Executive Director, Nevada State Board of Massage Therapy*
Niki Munk, *PhD, LMT, researcher, Department of Health Sciences, Indiana University*
Mica Rosenow, *LMT, researcher, Department of Health Sciences, Indiana University*
Sylvia Rosa-Casanova, *Senior Associate for Private Postsecondary Education, SCHEV*
Sandra Freeman, *Director, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia*
Kimberly Hodge, *Compliance Officer, Tennessee Higher Education Commission*
Gloria Lindsay, *Executive Director, Missouri Board of Therapeutic Massage*