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**To:** [Major, Erica \(BOS\)](#); [Melgar, Myrna \(BOS\)](#); [Preston, Dean \(BOS\)](#); [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Low, Jen \(BOS\)](#); [Smeallie, Kyle \(BOS\)](#); [Angulo, Sunny \(BOS\)](#); [Bintliff, Jacob \(BOS\)](#); [Temprano, Tom \(BOS\)](#); [Beinart, Amy \(BOS\)](#); [Dick-Endrizzi, Regina \(ECN\)](#)  
**Subject:** support for amendments to the planning codes for Massage & Bodywork professionals  
**Date:** Monday, November 29, 2021 10:06:11 AM

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My name is Lauren. I'm a California Certified Massage Therapist, with over 1,000 hour of training, who specializes in prenatal and postpartum bodywork. Hopefully this committee understands that CAMTC includes fingerprinting and Live Scan background check. I carry full professional liability insurance through ABMP, accept FSA payment, and provide coded superbills for health insurance reimbursement. I'm also a low-income, queer, solo parent to a 7 year old SFUSD student (receiving his second COVID vaccine at the time of this hearing). My practice has been serving the community for over 20 years. **Massage is health care**. Full stop. California and San Francisco's health departments both recognized this in prioritizing massage therapists as 1A health care providers for early COVID vaccine eligibility. It's time that we are treated as such. The legislation sponsored by Supervisors Ronen and Mandelman is a small step in that direction.

My practice has been closed since March 2020. It has been nearly impossible to find an affordable space in the District 8 community that I have lived and worked in for over 20 years that meets the overly restrictive regulations of the planning department. As one of the most established perinatal bodywork professionals in the area, my income has *never* exceeded 60% of the area median income. And over the past two years I have been living below the poverty level with my child struggling to reopen my integrative wellness practice. Our small businesses aid community health, often at a lower cost and in a more culturally competent way than traditional healthcare environments. We should honor this by providing equity in licensing that is fully in line with acupuncturists, chiropractors, and physical therapists.

Three amendments I would like to suggest:

- We need to prioritize the ability for massage establishments (both solo practitioners and those with a handful of employees) to operate in spaces with adequate ventilation. Ground floor spaces tend not to have any operable windows, while second and third floor neighborhood offices have multiple windows. Ventilation is key to our ability to work safely. Please do not make it more arduous for us to serve our community in safety.
- The conditional use authorization process for larger massage establishments needs to be added to the expedited process list. Waiting three to six months while paying rent on a space is simply not at all realistic for most of us as we seek to expand our very small businesses.
- The fee structure needs to be amended to reflect the financial reality of our profession. Even those of us who have been fortunate enough to expand our practices with a handful of staff to meet community needs rarely make *anywhere* near the AMI. Yet we are being asked to pay more in annual licensing fees than a lawyer does.

I urge this committee to support the proposed revisions as soon as possible. Please allow those

of us who have been dedicated to community health and wellness to operate in a fair, equitable, and safe way. Please help us reopen our practices, restart our local neighborhood economies, and attain self-sufficiency through this healing work as soon as possible. Thank you for your attention to this important work.

Lauren Elaine Davidson

Owner, [Noe Valley Integrative Bodywork](#)