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Organization: Self

Agenda Item # & Subject Matter

AGENDA ITEM XI-C (1) & Healing Hands Application

For or Against or Neutral: Against

Oral/Written Testimony: Written

Written Testimony

Subject: Letter of Support for Healing Hands Massage Institute Application

Dear Members of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board,

I am writing to express my support for Healing Hands Massage Institute's application to offer an Associate of Applied Science degree in Massage Therapy.

Degree authorization matters because it helps ensure that postsecondary education pathways are clear, transferable, and connected to the broader higher education system. In healthcare fields, degrees often matter less for immediate earnings and more for what comes next. They allow students to transfer credits, continue their education, and move forward without having to start over.

In my work with graduates from a range of healthcare and allied health training programs, I have seen capable, well-trained individuals slowed down by how educational pathways are structured rather than lack of skill. Even strong programs can leave students facing unnecessary barriers when they try to transfer credits, pursue additional education, or shift into related roles. For nontraditional and working students in particular, this kind of friction can interrupt progress and limit long-term mobility.

These individual barriers have broader implications for workforce stability in healthcare-related fields. When credentials do not transfer cleanly, it becomes harder for people to build on prior education or adapt as careers evolve. Placing strong programs within degree-granting pathways helps reduce those barriers. It supports retention and mobility while maintaining academic standards.

Programs that demonstrate consistent outcomes, such as licensure performance and student completion, show an ability to meet degree-level expectations when appropriate structure and oversight are in place. Bringing such institutions into the degree framework, with clear conditions and accountability, promotes alignment across community colleges, workforce education, and healthcare systems. It also helps avoid creating educational dead ends.

For these reasons, I encourage the Board to consider Healing Hands Massage Institute's application with attention to how degree authorization can improve pathway alignment and long-term student outcomes while maintaining the Board's standards.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Karan Gadhok, MD
Emergency Medicine Physician
Texas