

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 422**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

*David Henry Argosky LeBoeuf*

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:*

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to creating a voluntary licensure pathway for traditional Asian bodywork therapy practices.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>David Henry Argosky LeBoeuf</i>	<i>17th Worcester</i>	<i>1/16/2025</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 422**

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By Representative LeBoeuf of Worcester, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 422) of David Henry Argosky LeBoeuf for legislation to establish a board of registration of Asian bodywork therapy. Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure.

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court  
(2025-2026)**

An Act relative to creating a voluntary licensure pathway for traditional Asian bodywork therapy practices.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. MGL Chapter 13 is hereby amended to include after Section 98 the  
2 following subsection:-

3 (a) There shall be within the division of occupational licensure a board of registration of  
4 Asian Bodywork Therapy. The board shall consist of 5 members who shall be appointed by the  
5 governor for terms of 3 years chosen from a list of recommended individuals submitted by the  
6 American Organization for Bodywork Therapies of Asia (AOBTA®) Massachusetts Chapter or  
7 COSP approved school, the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental  
8 Medicine (NCCAOM)®, Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine  
9 (ACAHM), or any other board- approved professional traditional Asian therapy organization or  
10 institution engaged in teaching traditional Asian healing therapies, 3 of whom shall be certified  
11 Asian Bodywork Therapists who have been actively engaged in the practice of Asian Bodywork  
12 Therapy in the commonwealth for not less than 3 years immediately before their appointments, 1

13 of whom shall be an individual who is or has been actively engaged in the operation of a licensed  
14 Asian Bodywork Therapy school; and 1 of whom shall be a consumer who is familiar with the  
15 Asian Bodywork Therapists or comparable Traditional Asian Healing Therapy fields.

16 (b) of the initial members appointed to the board, 2 shall serve for terms of 3 years, 2  
17 shall serve for terms of 2 years and 1 shall serve for terms of 1 year. Each member of the board  
18 shall hold office until his successor has been appointed. A vacancy in the membership of the  
19 board shall be filled for the unexpired term in the manner provided for the original appointment.  
20 A member may be removed by the governor for cause.

21 (c) The board shall at its first meeting and, annually thereafter, elect from among its  
22 members, by majority vote, a chairman, vice-chairman and secretary. The board shall meet at  
23 least once every 3 months and may hold additional meetings as necessary to discharge its duties.  
24 Members shall receive no compensation but shall be entitled to reasonable travel expenses.

25 SECTION 2. MGL Chapter 147 is hereby amended to include after Section 62 the  
26 following subsection:-

27 (a) The board shall: (i) administer and enforce sections outlined in this bill; (ii) adopt  
28 rules and regulations governing the licensure of Asian Bodywork Therapists, the practice of  
29 Asian Bodywork Therapy and the operation of Asian Bodywork Therapy schools and programs  
30 to promote public health, welfare and safety; (iii) establish standards of professional and ethical  
31 conduct (iv) establish standards for continuing education; and (v) investigate complaints, conduct  
32 inspections, review billing and treatment records and set and administer penalties for fraudulent,  
33 deceptive or professionally incompetent and unsafe practices and for violations of rules and  
34 regulations promulgated by the board.

35 (b) The board shall make available to the public a list of licensed Asian Bodywork  
36 Therapists as well

37 as a list of each licensed and board-approved facility under its jurisdiction. The board  
38 shall establish

39 by regulation a code of ethics.

40 (c) The board shall adopt rules and regulations to differentiate among varying scopes of  
41 practice within Asian Bodywork Therapy, to ensure that an Asian Bodywork Therapist operates  
42 within the authorized scope of practice for which the Asian Bodywork Therapist has  
43 demonstrated satisfactory competency to the board; provided that the board shall require no more  
44 than one application for any applicant seeking to practice multiple disciplines under its  
45 jurisdiction. The board shall host at least 1 public session to solicit information from qualifying  
46 Asian Bodywork Therapists to inform the rules and regulations.

47 (d) The board shall adopt policies and procedures to evaluate and approve out of state  
48 schools and programs for licensure, continuing education and grandfathering.

49 SECTION 3. As used in this section and sections [1-14], inclusive, the following words  
50 shall, unless the context requires otherwise, have the following meanings:-

51 "Board", the board of registration of Asian Bodywork Therapy.

52 "Asian Bodywork Therapist" or "Asian Bodywork practitioner", a person licensed by the  
53 board who instructs or administers Asian Bodywork or Asian Bodywork Therapy for  
54 compensation.

55 “Asian Bodywork Therapy”, the practice of Chinese bodywork lineages (Forms), such as  
56 Acupressure, Shiatsu, or Tuina. Asian Bodywork Therapy is one of the professional branches of  
57 Chinese Medicine nationally recognized by the National Certification Commission for  
58 Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM). ABT assessment and treatment may include,  
59 but is not limited to: touching, stretching,

60 pressing or holding meridians and/or acu-points, primarily with the hands. Appropriately  
61 trained

62 practitioners may also use external application of medicinal plants, heat or cold;  
63 meditation, dietary,

64 lifestyle and exercise suggestions/recommendations; cupping; gua sha; moxibustion and  
65 other

66 adjunct therapies, techniques or practices.

67 “Asian Bodywork Therapy (ABT) shall not include diagnoses, the prescribing of drugs or  
68 medicines,

69 any services or procedures outside of the scope of traditional Asian healing therapy  
70 and/or for which

71 a license to practice medicine, or podiatry is required by law.

72 “Asian Bodywork Therapy intern”, an Asian Bodywork Therapy student engaged in  
73 practical training

74 of Asian Bodywork Therapy on human subjects in an Asian Bodywork Therapy  
75 internship program

76 approved by the board of Asian Bodywork Therapy.

77 “Licensed or Board-Approved School or Program”, a school or program of instruction in  
78 Asian

79 Bodywork Therapy that meets or exceeds the national education standards set by the  
80 American

81 Organization for Bodywork Therapies of Asia (AOBTA®), their successor organizations  
82 and/or

83 board approved organizations, other state or federal agency or department and/or after  
84 meeting

85 minimum standards as determined by using the CIP Code 51.3502 Title: Asian  
86 Bodywork Therapy.

87 Board-Approved Schools and Programs include, but are not limited to members of the  
88 AOBTA®

89 Council of Schools and Programs (AOBTA®-COSP).

90 "Licensed or Board-Approved Asian Bodywork Therapy establishment", a place, office,  
91 clinic, or facility licensed by the board to offer Asian Bodywork Therapy services.

92 SECTION 4. MGL Chapter 147 is hereby amended to include after Section 62 the  
93 following subsection:-

94 (a) No person shall hold themselves out to others as an Asian Bodywork Therapist or  
95 Practitioner,

96 practice Asian Bodywork Therapy, unless the person holds a valid license issued in  
97 accordance with this chapter. A person licensed to practice Asian Bodywork Therapy shall not  
98 perform: (i) diagnosis of illness or disease; (ii) application of ultrasound; (iii) prescription of  
99 medicines.

100 (b) The following practitioners shall be exempt from the licensure requirements of this  
101 section:

102 (i) a person who: (A) is otherwise licensed, certified or registered under the General  
103 Laws; (B) is performing services within the person's authorized scope of practice; and (C) does  
104 not hold the person's self out to be an Asian Bodywork Therapist. (ii) a person who is duly  
105 licensed, registered, certified or operating legally in another state, territory, the District of  
106 Columbia or a foreign country when temporarily called into the commonwealth to teach a course  
107 related to Asian Bodywork Therapy or to consult with a person licensed as an Asian Bodywork  
108 Therapist under this chapter; (iii) a student of Asian Bodywork Therapy who is enrolled in a  
109 licensed or board-approved school or program for Asian Bodywork Therapy and is performing  
110 work as a required component of the student's course of study at such school, including  
111 supervised internships; provided, however, that the student shall not hold the student's self out as  
112 a licensed Asian Bodywork Therapist under this chapter and shall not receive compensation for  
113 the work; (iv) a person giving Asian Bodywork Therapy to a member of that person's immediate  
114 family for which the person received no compensation; (v) a person, duly licensed, registered or  
115 certified in another state, territory, the District of Columbia or a foreign country who is

116 incidentally in the commonwealth to provide service as part of an emergency response team  
117 working in conjunction with disaster relief officials; and (vi) a person giving Asian Bodywork  
118 Therapy in a sporting, health or other event, whether on a single day or on consecutive days, that  
119 is non-compensatory and under the supervision of a licensed Asian Bodywork Therapist.

120 (c)"Nothing in this act shall restrict or prohibit individuals from engaging in personal or  
121 professional practices associated with Chinese medicine. These disciplines include, but are not  
122 limited to, Energy Medicine (such as Clinical, Medical or Health Qigong), Spatial Harmony  
123 (such as Feng Shui), Spiritual Practices, Mindfulness and Meditation (including the instruction,  
124 personal and professional practice of disciplines such as Reiki, Buddhism, Confucianism,  
125 Daoism, and Shinto), Exercise (such as the personal, professional practice, and instruction of  
126 Martial Arts, Tai Chi and Movement Qigong), and other similar East Asian practices that may  
127 operate within the scope of Chinese medical theory. The intention of this exemption language is  
128 to ensure that all interpretations of this bill respect the diverse aspects of Chinese medicine and  
129 prevent any unwarranted board overreach."

130 (d) Nothing in this Act prohibits a person from engaging in the practice, instruction, or  
131 clinical application of Qigong.

132 (e) Nothing in this Act prohibits a person from engaging in the practice, instruction, or  
133 clinical application of Tai Chi.

134 (f) Nothing in this Act prohibits a person from engaging in the practice, instruction, or  
135 clinical application of Reiki.

136 (g) Nothing in this Act prohibits a person from engaging in a profession, or professional  
137 branch of Chinese Medicine, not specifically named or defined within this Act.

138 SECTION 5. MGL Chapter 147 is hereby amended to include after Section 62 the  
139 following subsection:-(a) A person who desires to engage in the practice of Asian Bodywork  
140 Therapy shall apply on a form furnished by the board that shall be signed and sworn to by the  
141 applicant. Each application shall be accompanied by payment of the fee prescribed by the  
142 executive office for administration and finance pursuant to this Act. Upon submission of a  
143 completed application to the board and the payment of the required fee, the board may issue a  
144 license to practice as an Asian Bodywork Therapist to an applicant who: (i) has obtained a high  
145 school diploma or its equivalent; (ii) is 18 years of age or older; (iii) has submitted 2 professional  
146 letters of reference, with at least 1 being from an employer or professional in the Asian  
147 Bodywork Therapy or holistic healthcare or medical field; (iv) is of good moral character, as  
148 determined by the discretion of the board; (v) (1) has successfully completed a course of study or  
149 supervised instruction at a licensed or board-approved Asian Bodywork Therapy school or  
150 program that has been determined appropriate by the board; or (2) has had a legal, professional  
151 Asian Bodywork Therapy practice in another jurisdiction for no less than 10 years prior to the  
152 passage date of this Act and has maintained professional liability insurance without incident;  
153 and, either has maintained a relationship as a professional ABT practitioner through the  
154 American Organization for Bodywork Therapies of Asia®, the National Certification  
155 Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, or comparable organization approved by  
156 the Board; or, can prove completion of apprenticeship training or provide a certificate of  
157 completion of training, or demonstrate competency to the satisfaction of the board; and (vi)  
158 provides proof of professional liability coverage; and (vii) demonstrates the professional  
159 competence that may be required by the board's regulations. The board shall require no more  
160 than one application for any

161 applicant seeking to practice multiple disciplines under its jurisdiction; provided, that said  
162 applicant can demonstrate competency in each discipline as determined by the board; provided  
163 further, that the board shall collect one fee per application.

164 (b) The commissioner of the division of professional licensure shall determine the  
165 renewal cycle and

166 renewal period for Asian Bodywork Therapy licenses. Each person licensed in  
167 accordance with these sections shall apply to the board for renewal of the person's license not  
168 later than the expiration date, as determined by the board unless the license was revoked,  
169 suspended or canceled earlier by the board as a result of a disciplinary proceeding instituted  
170 pursuant to this chapter. Applications for renewal shall be made on forms approved by the board  
171 and accompanied by payment of a renewal fee, as prescribed by the executive office for  
172 administration and finance pursuant to previous statutes provided, however, that the fee shall not  
173 be less than \$100. (c) As a condition of license renewal, a licensed Asian Bodywork Therapist  
174 shall furnish the board with satisfactory proof that the licensee: (i) has professional liability  
175 coverage; and (ii) Upon satisfactory compliance with the licensing requirements for Asian  
176 Bodywork Therapists the board shall issue a renewal license showing that the holder is entitled  
177 to be licensed for the renewal period. The board may provide for the late renewal of a license  
178 that has lapsed and may require payment of a late fee.

179 SECTION 6. MGL Chapter 147 is hereby amended to include after Section 62 the  
180 following subsection:-

181 The board may provide reciprocal licenses for registered, certified or licensed Asian  
182 Bodywork Therapists from other jurisdictions if the standards of registration, certification or

183 licensure in their jurisdictions are reasonably equivalent to those set forth in previous sections.  
184 The board shall adopt rules and regulations for the implementation of this section. The fee for a  
185 reciprocal license shall be prescribed by the executive office of administration and finance  
186 pursuant to previous statutes and shall not be less than \$100. An applicant shall not be granted  
187 reciprocity if his license to practice is revoked or suspended by any other jurisdiction. The board,  
188 subject to a vote of the majority of its members, may revoke a license if the license, certificate,  
189 registration or authority issued by another state or territory of the United States, the District of  
190 Columbia, or a foreign state or nation is revoked, canceled, suspended, or otherwise acted  
191 against, or if the holder has been disciplined in that jurisdiction, if the basis for the action would  
192 constitute a basis for disciplinary action in the commonwealth.

193 SECTION 7. MGL Chapter 147 is hereby amended to include after Section 62 the  
194 following subsection:-

195 The board may grant a license to an applicant for an Asian Bodywork Therapist license  
196 who: (i) (A) provides documentation, acceptable to the board, that demonstrates that the  
197 applicant has met the requirements sets forth in previous statutes, provided an appropriate  
198 number of hours of bodyworks therapy, as determined by the board, to members of the public for  
199 compensation; (B) has been authorized to practice Asian Bodywork Therapy by the municipal  
200 board of health within the commonwealth; provided, however, that the authorization shall be  
201 valid not more than 2 years after the date of issuance; (C) provides proof of the successful  
202 passage of a board approved examination or certification administered by a national organization  
203 listed in statute, or board accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies; or (D)  
204 (1) within a period of two years after the effective date of the rules promulgated under this Act,  
205 produces proof that he or she has met at least one of the following requirements by the time of

206 application: (2) is a member of the American Organization for Bodywork Therapies of Asia®  
207 (AOBTA®) at a level of membership requiring national competency standards of training,  
208 including Certified Practitioner, Registered Instructor or Certified Instructor; or another board  
209 approved ABT professional organization, based on a verified minimum level of training,  
210 demonstration of competency, and adherence to ethical standards set by their governing body  
211 approved by the Board; or (3) has practiced any of the Asian Bodywork Therapy as listed  
212 Section 11 for at least 10 years prior to the passage date of this Act; and at least one of the  
213 following; has maintained professional liability insurance without incident, or can provide a  
214 certificate of completion of training, or prove completion of apprenticeship training, or  
215 demonstrate competency to the satisfaction of the board; or (4) is currently certified by the  
216 National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine® as a Diplomat in  
217 Asian Bodywork Therapy [Dipl. ABT (NCCAOM)®]; or (2) An individual who has practiced  
218 Asian Bodywork Therapy for a minimum of one year prior to the passage date of this Act, but  
219 has not less than 200 hours of formal Traditional Asian Healing Therapies training, may  
220 be issued a provisional license under this Section, but with additional training must meet the  
221 national recognized competency standards, or become professionally certified with a board-  
222 approved ABT organization within 5 years of the approved application; and (ii) submits a  
223 completed application and pays the necessary fee prescribed by the executive office for  
224 administration and finance (iii) is of good moral character, as determined by the discretion of the  
225 board; and (iv) provides proof of professional liability coverage.

226 SECTION 8. MGL Chapter 147 is hereby amended to include after Section 62 the  
227 following subsection:-

228 (a) The board shall conduct inspections and investigate all complaints filed that relate to  
229 the proper practice of Asian Bodywork Therapy, the operation of an Asian Bodywork Therapy  
230 facility and any violation of sections of this statute inclusive, or a rule or regulation of the board.  
231 Such a complaint may be brought by any person or the board may, on its own, initiate a  
232 complaint.

233 (b) The board shall be under the supervision of the division of professional licensure and  
234 shall have all the authority conferred in Mass General Law inclusive. For the purposes of this  
235 section and additional sections, conduct that places into question the holder's competence to  
236 practice Asian Bodywork Therapy or operate an Asian Bodywork Therapy facility shall include,  
237 but not be limited to: (i) committing fraud or misrepresentation in obtaining a license; (ii)  
238 criminal conduct that the board determines to be of such a nature as to render the person unfit to  
239 practice as a licensed Asian Bodywork Therapist to operate a licensed Asian Bodywork Therapy  
240 facility, as evidenced by criminal proceedings that resulted in a conviction, guilty plea or plea of  
241 nolo contendere or an admission of sufficient facts; (iii) violating any rule or regulation of the  
242 board; (iv) failing to cooperate with the board or its agents in the conduct of an inspection or  
243 investigation; (v) failing to fulfill any continuing education requirements set out by the board;  
244 (vi) violating an ethical standard that the board determines to be of such a nature as to render the  
245 person unfit to practice as an Asian Bodywork Therapist or to operate a licensed Asian  
246 Bodywork Therapy facility, including, but not limited to: (A) inappropriate conduct or touching  
247 in the practice of Asian Bodywork Therapy; (B) offering medical diagnosis; or (C) negligence in  
248 the course of professional practice.

249           The board may issue an order to a licensee directing the licensee to cease and desist from  
250 unethical or unprofessional conduct if the board finds, after the opportunity for a hearing, that the  
251 licensee has engaged in such conduct.

252           (c) An Asian Bodywork Therapist whose license to practice is suspended for more than 1  
253 year for professional misconduct with regard to insurance claims shall not own, operate, practice  
254 in or be employed by another healthcare practice or practitioner, in any capacity, until the license  
255 is reinstated by the board. An Asian Bodywork Therapist whose license is suspended for a 12 of  
256 15 second offense with regard to insurance claims shall have the license permanently revoked  
257 and may not own, operate, practice in or be employed by a business that provides healthcare.

258           (d) Nothing in this section shall limit the board's authority to impose sanctions by consent  
259 agreements that are considered reasonable and appropriate by the board. A person aggrieved by a  
260 disciplinary action taken by the board pursuant to this section or this Act, may file a petition for  
261 judicial review.

262           SECTION 9. MGL Chapter 147 is hereby amended to include after Section 62 the  
263 following subsection:-

264           The board shall establish standards to be met by the Asian Bodywork Therapist schools  
265 and programs. The board shall approve the Asian Bodywork Therapy school and program  
266 curricula, training, facilities and instructors based upon nationally recognized standards of each  
267 discipline. A school or program shall not teach Asian Bodywork Therapy without prior approval  
268 by the board unless licensed by the division of professional licensure or other state or federal  
269 agency or department.

270 SECTION 10. MGL Chapter 147 is hereby amended to include after Section 62 the  
271 following subsection:-

272 The board shall adopt regulations necessary to ensure the safe and lawful practice of  
273 Asian Bodywork Therapy. Every person receiving a license from the board shall conspicuously  
274 display the license in his place of business.

275 SECTION 11. MGL Chapter 147 is hereby amended to include after Section 62 the  
276 following subsection:-

277 (a) Only a person duly licensed under this chapter shall be designated as an Asian  
278 Bodywork Therapist (ABT) and entitled to use the terms “Asian Bodywork Therapist”, “Asian  
279 Bodywork Practitioner” and their abbreviations or derivations, or any specific titles,  
280 abbreviations or derivations of Asian Bodywork Therapy forms when advertising or printing  
281 promotional material.

282 A person who uses such a term in the person’s professional title without being authorized  
283 to do so shall be subject to discipline by the board. A person who: (i) knowingly aids and abets  
284 another to or (ii) knowingly employs a person not authorized to use such a term in the course of  
285 the employment, shall be subject to a disciplinary proceeding before the board.

286 Nothing in this section shall prohibit a licensed Asian Bodywork Therapist from using  
287 terms reflecting a specific discipline for which they are authorized by the board to practice when  
288 advertising or printing promotional material.

289 It shall be a violation of this chapter for a person to advertise: (i) as an Asian Bodywork  
290 Therapist or Asian Bodywork Therapy facility unless the person has an employee who holds a

291 valid license under this chapter; (ii) by combining advertising for a licensed Asian Bodywork  
292 Therapy service with escort or dating services; (iii) as performing Asian Bodywork Therapy in a  
293 form in which the person has not received training or of a type that is not licensed or otherwise  
294 recognized by law or administrative rule; or (iv) by using any term other than “Asian Bodywork  
295 Therapy,” “Asian Bodywork Therapist,” and their form-specific titles and derivations to refer to  
296 the service.

297 As used in this section, the term “advertise” shall include, but not be limited to: (i) the  
298 issuance of a card, sign or device to another; (ii) the causing, permitting or allowing of a sign or  
299 marking on or in a building, vehicle or structure; (iii) advertising in a newspaper or magazine, on  
300 television or through electronic means or online advertising means or forums; (iv) any listing or  
301 advertising in a directory under a classification or heading that includes the words “Asian  
302 Bodywork Therapist” “Asian Bodywork Therapy”, or any of their form-specific titles and  
303 derivations; or (v) a commercial broadcast by airwave transmission.

304 (b) Any persons who: (i) is otherwise licensed, certified or registered under the law; (ii) is  
305 performing services within the person’s authorized scope of practice; and (iii) does not hold the  
306 person’s self out to be an Asian Bodywork Therapist shall be exempt from this section.

307 SECTION 12. MGL Chapter 147 is hereby amended to include after Section 62 the  
308 following subsection:-

309 The board of registration of Asian Bodywork Therapy shall promulgate regulations not  
310 more than 180 days after a quorum of the board is appointed.

311 SECTION 13. MGL Chapter 147 is hereby amended to include after Section 62 the  
312 following subsection:-

313 All orders, rules and regulations duly made and all licenses and approvals duly granted  
314 that are in force immediately before the effective date of this Act shall continue in force and shall  
315 thereafter be enforced until superseded, revised, rescinded or canceled in accordance with law by  
316 the appropriate board.

317 SECTION 14. MGL Chapter 147 is hereby amended to include after Section 62 the  
318 following subsection:-

319 The board of registration of Asian Bodywork Therapy shall receive applications for  
320 licenses not later than 1 year following passage of this act.