



Legislation Details (With Text)

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Proposed Massage Facility Ordinance

Summary and Background Information: Council is presented with an ordinance to repeal our outdated massage parlor code and implement a massage facility code to support a legitimate health care activity and combat illicit massage businesses. When the city clerk's office took over business licensing a few years ago, it quickly became apparent that the massage parlor ordinance was ineffective and long outdated because it required licensure under a state code repealed several years ago. In 1977 both the city and state adopted a massage parlor code in an attempt to mitigate prostitution and in 1990 places of massage therapy were excluded from the definition of massage parlor. In 2008 the state preempted local ability to license massage therapists and in 2015 the state massage parlor code was believed to be unnecessary and was sunset. Currently, the city has no ability to license legitimate massage therapy businesses other than as a massage parlor and therapist licensure through the state department of regulatory affairs is rampant with fraud. Our neighborhood services inspectors have discovered evidence of women living in massage businesses which is indicative of sex trafficking and the illicit businesses are all fronted by state-licensed massage therapists. Traditional prostitution stings are resource intensive, inadvertently target the victim and have little impact on the madam or pimp. Trafficking victims do not cooperate with law enforcement out of fear. Our goal with the adoption of this ordinance is to create a barrier to entry illicit businesses by detecting hidden ownership through the application process. The City of Aurora has had great success with the adoption of a similar ordinance and closed approximately 20 illicit businesses operating in their city.

Staff Responsible (Department Head): City Clerk Laura Bauer
Staff Member Presenting: City Clerk Laura Bauer