

United States Organization of Licensed Massage Therapists
(USOLMT)

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Dear Mr. Sweeney,

I am writing to bring your attention to the allegations against NFL quarterback Deshaun Watson and to ask ABMP to join USOLMT in making a public statement against the sexual solicitation of massage therapists. We request your support and solidarity with massage therapists who speak out against sexual assault and harassment in our industry.

In case you are not yet aware, Mr. Watson's attorney went public with a statement saying that "happy endings are not a crime". You can hear the video clip for yourself here:

[Happy Endings are Not a Crime](#)

Our concern is that this statement will embolden those seeking inappropriate services from Licensed Massage Therapists, as this is a high-profile public case, jeopardizing the safety and well-being of legitimate massage practitioners. We feel strongly that this statement must be corrected in the media.

The latest news stories state that Mr. Watson saw 66 different massage therapists over a period of 17 months, 24 of whom have filed lawsuits or criminal complaints against him, accompanied by claims that Mr. Watson exposed himself, masturbated during massage sessions, placed massage therapist's hands on his genital area and more. As a result, the massage therapists working with Mr. Watson claim to have suffered panic attacks, anxiety, depression, blackouts, and at least one left the industry entirely.

So far, the NFL has not penalized Mr. Watson in any way. In fact, he just signed a guaranteed 5-year, \$230 million dollar contract with the Cleveland Browns – the most lucrative contract in NFL history – signed after the allegations of sexual abuse were publicized. We are saddened and outraged that high-profile cases like these involving massage therapists go unpunished and make it worse for those practitioners who are legitimately in this field to serve the public good.

On behalf of USOLMT members, and the profession, we would appreciate ABMP in joining us in taking action to defend the legitimate practice of massage therapy and to correct the statement made by Mr. Watson's attorney.

Regards,

Stephanie Rodriguez, LMT

Executive Director, USOLMT

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