

**CHRIS CATE PROPOSES STEPS TO COMBAT RED LIGHT ACTIVITY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING**  
*Public Safety Chairman Introduces Changes to Massage Establishment Police Permits*

San Diego, CA – The San Diego Municipal Code currently identifies massage establishments as a police-regulated business. However, it also exempts massage establishments that only employ individuals with certification from the California Massage Therapy Council (CAMTC) from needing to obtain a police permit. Currently, of the approximately 640 massage establishments in San Diego, only five (5) have a police permit on file with the City.

Since the Municipal Code currently does not require all massage establishments to obtain a revocable permit, establishments that have been found to conduct illicit activities, such as prostitution and human trafficking, are enforced via the Red-Light Abatement Act outlined in California Penal Code Section 11225, which can be a time consuming and costly process for the City.

“The outlined proposal follows Best Practices that CAMTC has observed have proven effective in numerous cities and counties, along with adequate enforcement,” said Beverly May, Director of Governmental Affairs for the California Massage Therapy Council.

Under the current process, uncooperative establishments engaging in illicit activity can take as long as one-year before compliance is achieved or the establishment is effectively shut down. As such, Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods Chairman, Chris Cate, issued a Memorandum requesting the following:

- Remove the existing exemption for massage establishments that hire only CAMTC certified massage therapists and re-instate a mandatory revocable massage establishment police permit for all massage establishments;
- Include an amendment to San Diego Municipal Code that includes a robust list of grounds for permit suspension and revocation, which includes all violations outlined in California Business Professions Code Section 4609 and other violations relating to prostitution, human trafficking, lewdness, etc.;
- Include a “rotating door” amendment to the San Diego Municipal Code prohibiting the issuance of new massage establishment police permits in the same location as one that has been closed for illicit activity, or other serious violations, for at least two years as well as prohibiting the transfer of ownership while an action with the City is pending;
- Work with the Finance Department to evaluate a massage establishment police permit fee that is lower than the current cost and evaluate the option of a lower permit fee for massage establishments owned and operated by one massage therapist.

“The goal of proposing changes is to provide the San Diego Police Department and City Attorney’s Office with the tools needed to effectively and efficiently shut down bad actors and combat human trafficking in massage establishments, while lifting up the legitimate profession of massage therapy,” stated Councilmember Chris Cate.

View the memorandum here: <http://bit.ly/2OgDhO2>