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HOUSE BILL NO. 543**AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE**(Proposed by the Governor
on April 9, 2012)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Delegate Robinson)

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 54.1-3029 of the Code of Virginia, relating to certification of massage therapists.*

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 54.1-3029 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 54.1-3029. Qualifications for a certified massage therapist.

A. In order to be certified as a massage therapist, the applicant shall furnish evidence satisfactory to the Board that the applicant:

1. Is at least 18 years old;

2. Has successfully completed a minimum of 500 hours of training from a massage therapy program, certified or approved by the State Council of Higher Education or an agency in another state, the District of Columbia, or a United States territory that approves educational programs, notwithstanding the provisions of § 23-276.2;

3. Has passed the National Certification Exam for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork, *the National Certification Exam for Therapeutic Massage, the Licensing Examination of the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards*, or an exam deemed acceptable to the Board of Nursing ~~leading to national certification~~; and

4. Has not committed any acts or omissions that would be grounds for disciplinary action or denial of certification as set forth in this chapter.

B. The Board may certify any applicant who has been practicing massage therapy for up to 10 years prior to July 1, 1997, and has completed at least 200 hours of training in an education program. Such programs may be, but shall not be required to be, certified or approved by the State Council of Higher Education or an agency in another state, the District of Columbia, or a United States territory that approves educational programs, or has been in practice for 10 years or more prior to July 1, 1997, and has completed 20 hours of such training; or has passed the National Certification Exam for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork prior to 1994.

C. The Board may issue a provisional certification to an applicant prior to passing the National Certification Exam for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork for such time and in such manner as prescribed by the Board. No more than one provisional certification shall be issued to any applicant.

D. The Board may certify without examination any applicant who is licensed or certified as a massage therapist in another state, the District of Columbia, a United States possession or territory, or another country, and, in the opinion of the Board, meets the requirements for certified massage therapists in ~~this~~ *the* Commonwealth.